CHICAGO LEDGER

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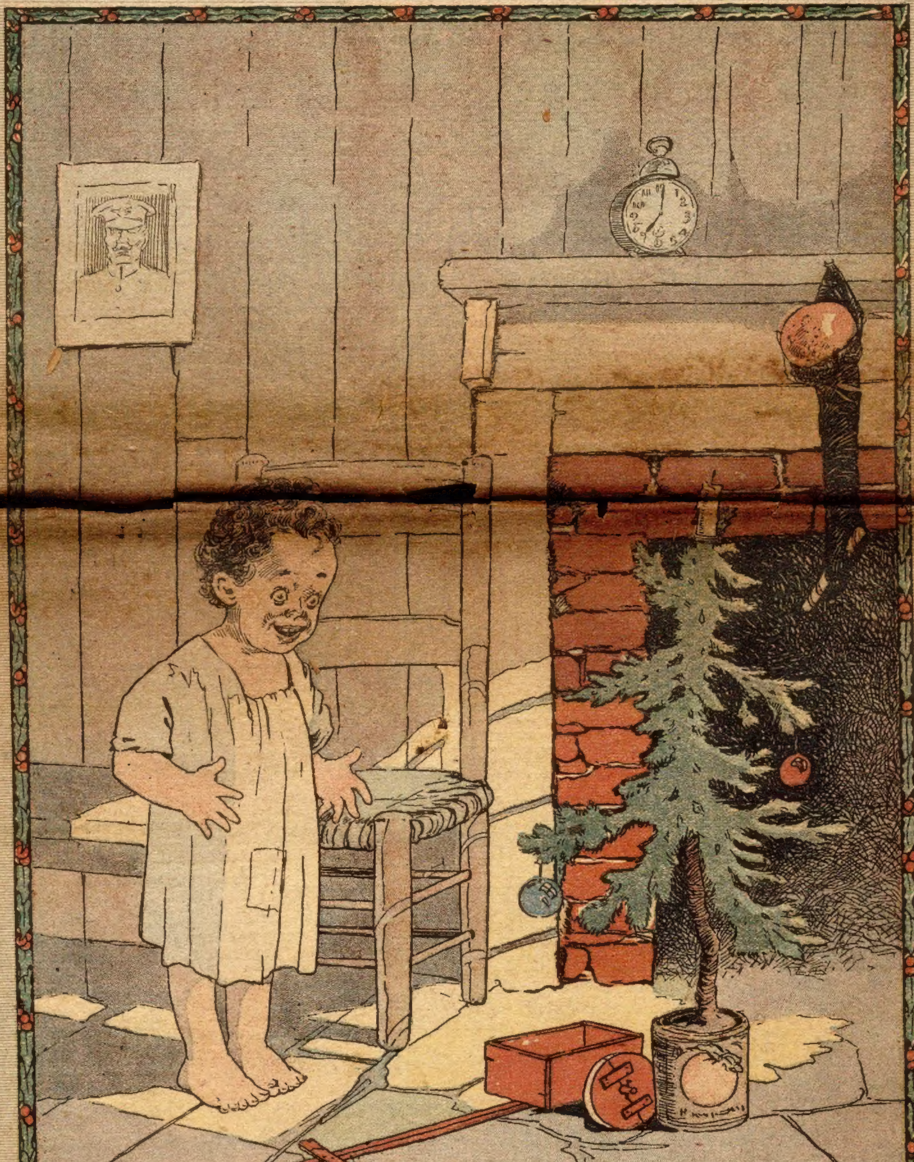

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Here Are the Prize Contest Winners

MORE interest was displayed in the Unfinished Story Contest of the Ledger, conducted in November, than in anything of the kind ever undertaken by the W. D. Boyce publications. Answers came in by the hundreds on every mail and the task of selecting the winners was not easy. The three winning letters were chosen by a secret ballot. Each judge read the answers and marked on a slip of paper the ones he believed best. The final comparison of the slips showed the decision was unanimous.

The story for which you were asked to supply an ending follows:

> The little boy had been naughty and his mother had threatened to switch him soundly. The youngster took to his heels, with his mother in hot pursuit. She was unable to catch him, however, and he took refuge in a far corner under a bed. Pleadings, commands and threats alike failed to move him, and his mother, being rather stout, refrained from going under the bed after him. Anyhow, the child's father was due home shortly and the mother decided that the whipping could wait. Father arrived on time and was told where the boy was. "I'll bring him out," he declared, and made his way to the bedroom. Dropping to his hands and knees, he started in under the bed——

First prize of $5 was awarded to V. F. Tannehill of Downs, Kan., for the following ending:

> Only one thought flashed thru the little boy's mind—Ma must be after Dad, too. But why have his hiding place invaded? There was another bed, so this was Dad's greeting: "Get under the other bed. I found this place first."

Second prize of $5 was awarded to Ella Van Meter, 9 years old, of R. F. D. No. 1, Woodford, Wis., for the following ending:

> Just as he reached out to get the boy the youngster raised his hands as high as the bed would allow and yelled "Kamerad!" At this the father and mother both laughed and the little boy came out and was forgiven.

Third prize, also of $5, was awarded to the following ending sent in by Miss Angie Harkey, R. F. D. No. 1, Huntertown, Ind.:

> When the father got his head under the bed he said: "Aren't you ashamed for being naughty? Just wait till I get you and you shall be punished for it." "But, papa," said the youngster, "mamma was making some of those biscuits like she made the other day and all I did was to ask her if she was making bullets to shoot the Kaiser with."

Congratulations are extended to the winners, to whom checks for the prize money will be sent, and the thanks of the editor are given to all the readers of the Ledger who took such interest in the contest and made it so successful.

What the Real St. Nicholas Was

ST. NICHOLAS himself was a real Bishop before he became Santa Claus. He was Bishop of Myra, about 300 years after Christ. Many wonderful tales are told about him; how he gave purses of gold to rescued sailors and miraculously saved unjustly condemned men, and how he made alive again some schoolboys whom a wicked innkeeper had packed away in a pickle tub. Artists have painted many pictures showing St. Nicholas and his wonderful doings. Here are two famous adventures of the Saint:

There was a rich merchant who was a Christian. He lived near the border of a heathen land. One day his only son was stolen by some wicked neighbors, who sold him to a heathen King. The boy was handsome, so the King made him the royal cup-bearer.

It happened that the King was giving a great banquet. And as the boy was presenting the cup full of wine he suddenly remembered that it was the Feast of St. Nicholas, and that his family—[illegible] mother and sisters—were happily celebrating the day. Thinking about this, the boy burst into tears. "Why do you cry?" asked the King angrily. "Do you not see that your tears are falling into my cup and spoiling my wine?"

"This is the Feast of St. Nicholas," answered the boy, sobbing, "and every one at home is eating and is merry! And, alas! I am not there!" "Great may be your St. Nicholas," replied the King scornfully, "but he cannot save you from my hand!"

Scarcely had the King spoken these words when a violent whirlwind tore around outside the palace and a flash of lightning illuminated the hall, and loud thunder roared. And lo! St. Nicholas himself, dressed in his Bishop's robes, and wearing his mitre, stood before the throne. He caught the boy by the locks, and flying with him thru the dome of the hall whirled him rapidly thru the air. In a few minutes he set him down in the midst of the astonished family, who were keeping the Feast of the good St. Nicholas.

Once there was a rich man who had no son to be heir to his wealth. He made a vow to St. Nicholas that if a son were born to him he would give the Saint a cup of gold. Time went by, and a beautiful boy was born. Immediately the father had a cup made of pure gold. It was very heavy and wrought all over with figures. In fact, the cup was so elegant that when the goldsmith had finished it the father decided to keep it for himself, and have a silver one made for the good Saint.

When the silver cup was finished, the father took his little son, who was old enough to walk, and set out for the shrine of St. Nicholas. On the way, feeling thirsty, he stopped near a river, and giving the cup of gold to the boy, told him to fetch some water. The child went to do so, but, stooping over, slipped on the bank and fell into the river. And he was seen no more.

The father, weeping with grief and repentance, hastened to the shrine and laid the silver cup on the altar. But the cup rolled to the floor. Once, twice, thrice, did the man place it again on the altar, but every time it fell to the ground. And while all the people who stood by marveled to see this wonder, suddenly the little boy himself stood on the altar steps, holding the cup of gold in his hand. St. Nicholas had saved him! Full of joy the father took the cup of gold, and placed it with the silver one upon the altar. Then, thanking St. Nicholas, he took his son and carried him safely home.

Justifiable Adoption.

THE big, flat-footed, hungry negro was up for theft.

"I caught him nippin' a fresh-made pumpkin pie from the MacGregor house on Marguerite street," explained Officer Casey.

"Did you?" demanded the judge.

"Dat's a rough word, Yo' Honah—sayin' Ah done stole hit. Now as ter de truf—dat punkin pie was settin' dar on de winder ledge, abandoned, jedge. Nobody nowhar nigh hit, jedge. Hit wuz a case of 'justifiable adoption,' brought on by de Christmus sperrit."

* * *

Probably Did.

"IN PREHISTORIC times a man won a wife by dragging her away by her hair."

"The ladies must have fastened their hair on more securely than they do now."

Furs Are in Style.

CHRISTMAS was drawing near and the two small girls were discussing that all-absorbing topic—presents.

"Mother says," announced the fair little girl, "that I'm going to have a fur for my neck this Christmas."

The dark little girl regarded her friend enviously for a moment, then, rallying, said contentedly:

"That's nothing! My mother took me to the doctor this morning and he said my tongue had been furred for a week past."

* * *

An Admirable Actor.

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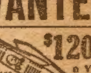

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The Branded Man's Christmas

By Alvah Milton Kerr

He hated with a deadly hate the man who sent him to prison, yet the love of two little children and an unusual crisis changed the course of his intentions.

[Copyright, 1918, W. D. Boyce Co.]

WHEN he emerged from the grim gate it was as he had hoped—no one known to him in the old days was waiting for him. In his bitterness he had shaken the hand of no man in the prison before leaving it. There were several officials and curious persons about the gate of the walled inferno, but he walked past them scornfully, in his eyes the look of one who sees some beckoning thing in the distance. One of the guards, a man who, with rifle in hand, had watched the ex-convict toiling shamefully thru many a day, was going out in the town upon an errand. He walked beside the released prisoner for a hundred yards in silence, then stopped and looked at the other's grim face.

"I go down this street," he said. "You have been a silent chap, and I don't feel that I really know you, but I certainly wish you good luck, and that you never have to come back here."

The ex-convict, gaunt, pallid, worn, looked down at the stocky, heavy-muscled guard, a gleam of anger in his brown eyes.

"Thank you," he said, "but you needn't worry. I shall not come back. A man who is brave enough always has the power to prevent that."

"Why did you come, then, in the first place?" the guard asked. He smiled, but his tone carried a faint sneer.

"Because I was innocent. Had I been guilty I never would have come." The man's eyes dwelt steadily on the guard's face. "Now that the State has branded me, has made me guilty, not of crime, but of having been in the penitentiary, I don't know that I owe the State any particular respect. Whatever I do, I shall not come here again."

The guard looked at him with a faintly softer light in his steel-gray eyes. "If what you say is true it certainly has been handed to you tough," he said. "Are you going back to your home town?"

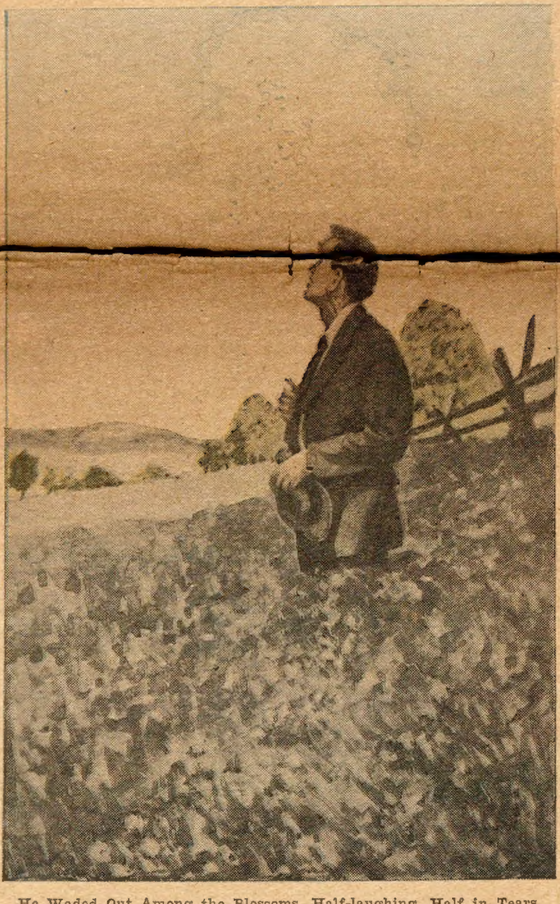
The Branded Man's mouth hardened. "If I do there will be trouble for some one," he said bitterly.

The guard laughed understandingly. "Well, don't be rash, but, whatever you do, good luck to you," he said, and turned down the side street.

Without replying, the Branded Man walked onward, his look of fierce purpose increasing with every step. Eighty miles southward lay the town where he had been convicted. A thousand times, lying awake in the foul darkness of his cell, he had pictured himself going forth from the prison, and always he saw himself passing directly by a certain railroad to that town and ruthlessly taking the life of the man who had ruined him thru sworn falsehood. In these bitter reveries he had fancied that no conceivable thing could be sweeter than that. He glanced back at the wide-spreading mass of stone buildings, the armed guards patroling the granite walls, and the terrible iron gate that had shut him in, and his lips tightened. He was young—not much past 30—and big of frame, but thin and worn. His brown hair was sprinkled with gray about his ears, and his face had lines in it that had no business there, lines tooled by weariness, hatred, suffering, and the infinite indignity of his recent life. The time was June, and as he pushed forward with knit brows a soft wind blew against him, in it now and again a streak of fine perfume. Suddenly he stopped short, his nostrils widening with the sweetness of it.

"Why, that is clover—blossoming clover!" he exclaimed aloud, looking keenly about him. "It must be down that way, and not so very far off. I'd give—why, I'd give 'most anything to see a field of clover!" And he turned excitedly and started off along a side street, his face aglow with anticipation. Thru eight years his nostrils had been filled with tainted air—the impure atmosphere of the prison workshops during the day, and at night the fetid reek of more than a thousand men caged like beasts. Twice each week this had been varied by an all-pervading odor of chloride of lime.

With a hint of pink gathering in his hollow cheeks, he came to the open fields. Clouds were rising in the west, sheer white and piled in mighty foam-heads, dazzingly pure. Between the clouds the eye passed into bottomless craters of blue, while directly above him the sky was one vast gulf of azure. His blood thrilled as he looked at it.



He Waded Out Among the Blossoms, Half-laughing, Half in Tears.

Presently he came to a fence, and beyond it spread a purple lake, millions of clover blooms that ran toward him in soft waves like perfumed water. He looked at it a moment, then laid his hands upon the fence and leaped over and waded out among the blossoms, half laughing, half in tears.

He brushed his hand across his forehead and aroused himselg to go onward. He tried to think of the future; he said to himself that he must go back and find the station of the railroad that ran southward, and hasten to that deed of revenge which had lain as a purpose in his brain so long. But again the enchantment of the meadows mastered him, and he wandered onward, forgetting in sheer rapture the hated Perjurer; and he presently came to a decaying rail fence that was overrun with wild grape vines. Aglow with delight, he broke off succulent young shoots from the vines and smacked his mouth over the pungent juice as he chewed them.

"I will not give it up!" he declared, as if defying a visible presence. "He deserves death; it is due him! He has made me suffer worse than death, and is there to be no punishment for him? I will give in this much and only this much. I will go away and start life over in a place where I am unknown and where he is not likely to come; but if he ever crosses my path, if he comes where I am, I shall take it as a sign from Heaven that what he has earned he is to have!" He shook his fist at the viewless something that seemed to stand before him, and turned and walked toward a railroad that ran northward, leading to a great city.

That night he entered the city. Thruout much of the next day he looked down from his window into a gray canyon at the bottom of which flowed a river of human beings, gorged all along its center with a jangling, clanging flow of trucks, carriages, automobiles and trolley cars.

With the end of the week he began to think seriously of work. He soon became aware that there were three avenues open to such as he, and practically but three: He might beg, or steal, or have labor of such lowly character that it mattered not who the worker was so he had bodily health and endurance. When this had become clear to him his few dollars had dwindled to as many nickels, and he sought for employment with a feeling of alarm lest he, punished for crime uncommitted, might be compelled to commit crime on account of that punishment. But presently he found labor in progress where the foreman asked almost no questions, pertinent or impertinent.

The old cable-car tracks were being torn out on the south side and a new electric system was being installed. The Branded Man set to work there, a member of one of several gangs of Italian laborers who were tearing out the cable conduit from its ancient bed of stone and cement, and at once proved himself mighty with the maul and bar.

One thing he found heartening; there was a constant flow of free people along the street, the passing and repassing on the temporary tracks of car loaded with human beings who were free, and he, after a fashion, was one of them! He liked the feel of it. But one day late in June there came into this new world of his a disturbing thing. Looking up from his work he saw the face of the man who had committed against him the unpardonable sin! He saw it but a moment inside a car window, glimpsing by in a throng of other faces, but there shot thru his being a thrill that held the qualities of both ice and fire. For a few moments he stood transfixed, gazing after the car, his fingers loosening and tightening on the crowbar in his hands. [illegible] took a half-dozen strides in the direction of the receding car, then, turning, looked about at the men, his face ashen, his hands shaking. The foreman, an American, looked at the Branded Man curiously.

"Sick?" he inquired.

"No," was the short reply, and the disturbed man returned to work. A moment later his face was scarlet and perspiration dripped from it.

That night he slept but little; the countenance of his betrayer swam in the darkness about him, maddening, hateful. It was a handsome face, mirroring vanity, self-seeking, love of ease, yet not without amiability. That which the nature back of it needed most was hardship, perhaps suffering. But to the Branded Man it stood for but one thing, a vast and hideous lie. If it passed him again he felt that he surely would follow it, and maybe end his better self. The next day, and day after day, he looked up from his work, scanning the faces in the passing cars, always eagerly, always with fear lest he should see it. But it remained absent from the throng, and as the days wore on thru August he questioned if he might not have been mistaken. Then one day a change came to the Branded Man.

It came with the wild clanging of a bell and a battalion chief of the city's fire department. A half mile westward smoke was lifting in black masses from the roof of a factory building, and the flight of the grizzly fire-fighter was toward it, a haste that took the appearance of rage looking out of his eyes. Almost before the laborers were aware, his stout buggy and flying horse were bearing down upon them, the driver smashing the gong-lever with his foot, the chief yelling for right of way. The street to be crossed was sadly obstructed, littered with construction material, and gashed deeply near the center where the cable conduit was being torn out.

When the chief was yet a hundred yards away the Branded Man looked up and comprehended. Instantly and with a yell to the gang he began placing ties across the excavation. The Latins stood gabbling; a foreman came running down the line, shouting orders, but with only a moment's pause the chief's buggy bounced across the temporary tracks and over the crazy bridge and raced away toward the billowing smoke. An hour later the chief drove back to the obstructed crossing, looking for the man who had acted so quickly. Two weeks later the Branded Man was a probationer fireman.

He came into this new field without uncovering his past, save to explain that he was from the southern part of the State, unmarried, in hard luck and not afraid of work nor danger nor even death. He and the chief had looked into each other's eyes very deeply, and the chief had believed in him.

As a probationer only a portion of the Branded Man's time was required at the fire engine house, and to him it seemed best that he should not frequent the human herding places overmuch. One afternoon he found Make-believe Park.

It was no more than the eastern half of two city blocks, lying unoccupied along the margin of a very great lake. About all it contained was an enormous old willow, with a brood of young willows about its base, and numerous little hills of sand, partly covered with weeds.

The Branded Man found the place when taking one of his long walks, and entering it, seated himself upon the side of one of the dunes near the water. He carried a newspaper, but his attention was diverted from it by voices from the other side of the sand hill, voices musical with childhood. He at once arose, a swift light brightening his face, and peeped around the mimic hill expectantly. A little boy in a jumper suit and a little girl in a blue frock were digging caves in the sand at the base of the hillock. Each was scooping out the sand with the aid of a broken dish, and each to the other was communicating amazing and wonderful things. The face of the Branded Man lost all its stern, sad lines as he listened. At length the boy leaned back and contemplated the cavity with pleasure. Then, glancing up, he saw the Branded Man. For an instant his eyes widened with fear; but the eyes of the Branded Man were so radiant with good-will that the child's look of startled disapproval turned to tolerant questioning.

"Are you a policerman?" he demanded.

"No," said the Branded Man, "I am only a fireman. When houses get on fire I help to keep them from burning up."

"Do you?" cried the little fellow delightedly. He scrambled to his feet, for here was important company.

"Can you make caves?" he asked.

"Sure," said the Branded Man, and he came forward and dropped down on his knees and began digging in the sand. The little girl sat still and looked at him with blue and questioning eyees.

"Mans is too big to dig sand caves," said the tiny miss decidedly.

The Branded Man laughed. "We ought to have sand paddles to work with," he said, and arising, went down by the water and looked about. Presently he returned with a discolored shingle and a piece of very thin board, and seating himself, began shaping the paddles with his pocketknife.

"I have a little boy," he said smilingly. "He lives inside of me and he hasn't had a chance to play for a long, long time. You see, every man and every woman was once a little boy or a little girl, and they just grew up around the little boy or the little girl, covering them up. The child hidden at the center of a man is the best part of him, too."

The tiny pair looked mystified. "But I can't see your little boy at all," said the lad in the jumper suit.

"You just watch my hands and my eyes and in a minute you'll see him peeping out as he digs his cave," laughed the Branded Man. "What is your name?"

"Sanny," replied the boy.

"That means Samuel?"

"No, Sanford."

"Sure; how old are you?"

"I'm most 6. Tizzie is most 4."

"Tizzie? What does that stand for?"

"Earlizabreath."

"Oh, Elizabeth? You have nice names. Now, Sanford and Elizabeth, let's get busy. Here is a paddle for each of you. I'll dig with my knife."

Through two golden hours the three continued at play, talking of many things. The Branded Man's auditors found him enchanting. Sanny seemed the most entertained and impressed, but when, finally, the fireman announced that he must be going, little Tizzie came close to him and said solemnly, "Mans is good; I give kiss." The Branded Man dropped on his knees in the sand before her and the child put her arms about his neck and pressed her small mouth to his cheek. When he let her go his eyes were wet. How long, how very long, it had been since any one had kissed him! He stood up and remained a few minutes looking down at the two children tenderly. They were very pretty. In a vague way he felt that he had known them before, or some one who looked like them.

"Day after tomorrow, in the afternoon, I will come again," he said, "and I'll bring you some little boats, and we will sail them on the pools."

Sanny clapped his hands in glee, but Tizzie regarded him solemnly, vast appreciation in her big eyes. "When I say 'Now I lay me' I'll put you in the Amen," she said. The Branded Man looked at her hungrily, and again there was mist in his eyes. They went together as far as the row of soft maples.

"Where do you live?" asked the Branded Man.

"Round the corner, there, in a house that is brown. The doctor he says my mother is pale," said Sanny, as if the state of being "pale" had very seriously impressed him.

The Branded Man looked sympathetic. "I bet you have a nice father," he ventured tentatively.

"Yes, but I heard the doctor tell my mother that papa stayed away from us too much. The doctor talked mad about it," asserted the little chap.

The Branded Man made a commiserating noise in his throat and slowly shook his head. He reluctantly released his hand from little Tizzie's grasp and struck into the street leading northward.

As promised, in the afternoon of the next day but one he came again to the park, bearing some packages under his arm. From among the sand dunes the children ran screaming to meet him. They had a gay hour that afternoon, sailing on the pools the two tiny boats he had brought, and, bedraggled and wet, as children properly should have been, ended their joyous adventure at the row of maple trees.

He found no opportunity to visit them again until half the following week had passed; but when he then came hurriedly into the place of make-believe he found the two children anxiously watching for his coming. Again he bore mysterious packages, and the three sat down together and the children opened the bundles in feverish haste. How astonished and enraptured they were, the Branded Man affecting to be as astonished as they! There was a really very extraordinary doll for Tizzie, who clutched it and straightway climbed into the giver's lap, solemn and speechless. For Sanny there was a cap and belt and tiny sword, and when he was accoutered in this warlike gear no soldier ever took the field with greater spirit.

Sanny communed with himself a moment. "You is most better than my papa, I think," he concluded, manifestly innocent of any consciousness of disloyalty.

The Branded Man chuckled and strained the little fellow against him tenderly. "Oh, you must not go back on your father!" he admonished. "I expect he is a better man than I ever dared be. Say, what do you call your father? What is his name?"

"Weldon is what mother calls him. I just calls him papa," said the boy.

A shadow came into the Branded Man's eyes; the smiling lines about his mouth straightened. He looked hard at the child, his nostrils suddenly quivering. "What is his other name—his last name?" he demanded. The little fellow looked up at his altered countenance wonderingly, then told him.

The Branded Man put the two children from his lap and arose quickly. They were the offspring of the man who had dealt him that unforgivable blow, the one living creature whose life he had sworn to take! He stared at them in mingled terror and ferocity, his fingers clinching and unclinching, while the two little people drew back and looked at him in fear and amazement. Suddenly he turned with a shudder of disgust and hurried from the place. When he had entered the street and gone northward two or three squares he paused and looked back. The children were following him with their eyes. A sudden aching lump arose in his throat, but he hurried onward and did not turn again.

Thus, in conflict and anxiety, time for the Branded Man drew on until the world was sealed in frost and people all about him began to talk of Christmas. Then, more than ever, was his mind beset with longings for the two little beings who loved him, and one day, when there was soft snow on the ground and sunlight in the air, all his bitterness melted in hunger and he went down to Make-believe Park. The two children were there, playing at coasting down one of the sand dunes on a small sled. The meeting was a strange one; the children were overjoyed to see him and the Branded Man was thrilled with a swift and sweet emotion when he first beheld them; but when he had come very near and their fatherhood looked clearly out of their faces he was swept by an ungovernable repugnance. Yet, conscious of how innocent they were of any fault, he straightway reproached himself and, seating himself on a big stone near by, tried to master himself and talk to them. The two children came eagerly and leaned on his knees and looked up in his face, the tongue of each trying to outrun the other in garrulousness.

"Sanny said you is been burned up in a fire or you would come," said Tizzie, her eyes glowing with wonder in her sad little face.

"And we aren't goin' to have any Christmas, 'cause papa's went away from us," announced Sanny, hurriedly. "My mother she cries and cries, but he don't come home."

The Branded Man's brow knit in a scowl, but he put a big, brown hand on each of the children and drew them nearer, protectingly and pityingly. "Has he gone away to—to—— How long has he been gone?" he asked.

"Mos' a month, I think," replied Sanny. "Las' night when we said 'Now I lay me' my mother she kneeled down with us and she prayed too, and then she said she think God will maybe send our papa back to us Christmas."

The Branded Man looked out at the cold, green expanse of the lake, a dark sadness in his eyes. "I suppose your ma loves your father?" he ventured. The children regarded him curiously. "She does, of course, or she wouldn't be crying for him," he went on hastily and apologetically. "And you are not to have any Christmas? Gee, but that's tough!"

The children began prattling again of what they would like to have for Christmas, and of the presents they had received, and of what they had done during the holidays of the year before. The Branded Man listened, pleasure and sadness mingling in his expression. "Well," he said with a deep sigh, "I used to have great Christmases when I was a little codger, and if there is any way I can fix it I'll give you a blowout when the day comes around." The children danced with the joy of anticipation. As he smiled at them they somehow no longer appeared like their father. He put his arms about them and drew them close to him, laughing happily.

"All right," he said when they parted. "I'll keep my eye out for some presents, and you can have the blow-out in good shape."

"An' if you see my fazzer you'll send him home, won't you?" said Tizzie, clinging to his hand and looking up at him with eyes that expressed faith that this big man could do anything in the world that he chose to do.

The Branded Man's face darkened instantly. "If I run across him I'll send him—— Yes, I'll send him to——" His teeth shut down on the sentence with a snap and he turned and walked away. When he had gone a couple of squares he turned and looked back. The two children, as once before, were standing in the street, holding each other's hands and following him with their eyes. A muttered oath, followed by a crooning, pitying note, came from his throat as he strode onward.

Three days later the Branded Man and a brother fireman were coming from the heart of the city southward on a street car. As the car neared Thirty-first street he became aware that there was a fire a few squares south and westward.

At once he leaped from the car and made off on a run for the scene of disaster.

The Roseberry, a "family" hotel, was burning. It stood a towering structure, flanked on the south and west and north by buildings and looking down on a parked square eastward. From within it came screams and animal-like yells, cutting thru a dull, sobbing growl as of a river pouring heavily from a great weir. Out and in the lower entrances excited people were rushing and jostling, down the spindling fire escapes white-faced, clinging figures were creeping, objects were being hurled from smoking windows, and high on the iron-railed balconies that faced the parked square women and children were screaming.

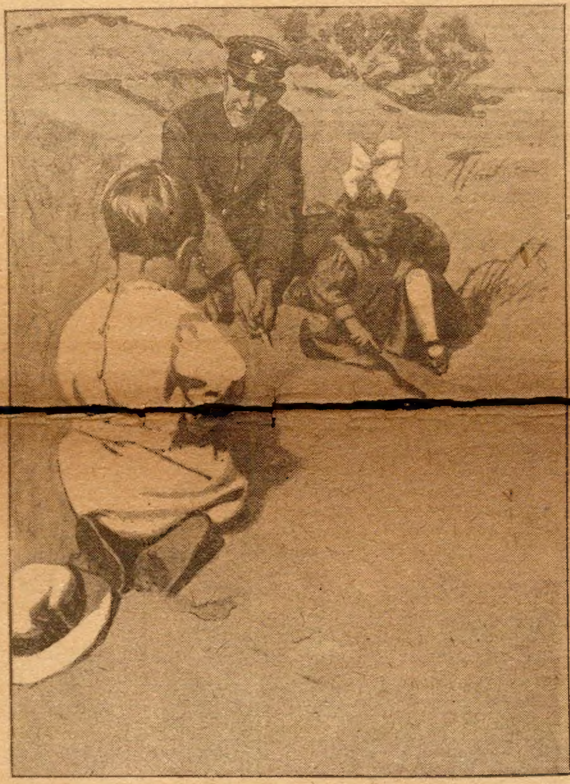
As the Branded Man arrived at the terrifying scene nozzlemen were climbing two fire escapes with leads of hose; a line was going in thru the main entrance and a stream was battering into the basement. Four engines were hissing and clacking, and others were deploying and connecting. Hoarse, explosive orders rang thru the tumult, policemen were pressing back a swarming multitude of importunate spectators, hose reels were unwinding and ladders were being pushed up the walls. But at the heart of the building the flames roared up the three shafts, uncurbable, almost beyond approach.

The Branded Man caught the wild peril of the situation with his first upward glance. Without questioning, almost without conscious volition, he hurriedly pushed forward thru the confusion of things, eager to grapple somehow with the enemy. The Branded Man found himself going up a fire escape, his comrade at his heels.

"There must be people on the top floor who are trapped," he heard himself saying. "They are too high up for the ladders, and it must be some of them can't get to the fire escapes or they wouldn't jump." A hose pipe swung against him, cold and pulsing; above him at the ninth floor nozzlemen had entered thru a window and were playing a stream on the fire. In a very brief time firemen were swarming seemingly over the whole exterior of the big structure.

The Branded Man went in at the tenth story. Inside the building was a blinding turmoil of vapors, the choking reek of burning bed-mattresses, upholstery, plush and silk and lace hangings, and the fumes of a thousand flaming things. The building seemed to vibrate with the hoarse laughter of the conflagration radiating from its center.

He came back to the window, gulping and gasping. He climbed the fire escape to the eleventh floor and entered, but again was driven out. Blackened and with eyes streaming, he ascended to the twelfth story and pushed inward. The rooms were gorged and thick with smoke. Blinded and breathing with short, explosive gasps, he crawled back to the window and out upon the fire escape. As he hung there, coughing and dizzy, he heard a human voice crying out from a smoking window some twenty feet northward along the wall. The window was directly below the eaves, and



Thru Golden Hours the Three Continued to Play.

the cries were as fearsome to hear as the cries of a wolf with its feet crushed in a trap.

Instantly the Branded Man clambered upward, following the spidery fire escape in its curve over the eaves to the roof. There he got to his feet and for a moment stood wavering, boring his knuckles in his eyes and panting. A low wall encompassed the top of the building some six feet from the projecting cornice, and from the wall to the rain gutter of the cornice ran a slightly sloping apron of tiles. The Branded Man stepped over the wall and slipped down the tiling to the gutter. The fearful yelling for help came from just below him. He shouted to some firemen who were near him to come to his aid.

"There's some one trapped in a room on the top floor, right under me here," he cried. "Quick! Get down here and hold on to my feet while I go over the cornice! I can reach the window if you let me down! Don't wait; whoever is below is going wild and will jump!"

Two red-faced, sweating firemen leaped over the wall and, slipping down the tiling, braced themselves in the gutter. The Branded Man bowed himself face downward over the eaves and they seized him by the legs and feet. "Form a solid chain there!" roared the captain who was on the roof. "Get in here, some more of you fellows, and brace those men! God! —that's a probationer going over the edge!"

Two agile fellows flung themselves over the wall, heads downward, and took a firm grip on the men in the gutter, while three others seized the feet of the last two and braced themselves behind the wall. Then the Branded Man slid over the cornice and faced the gulf below. As he went down he caught thru the swaying curtains of smoke strange glimpses of men and things at the bottom of the abyss. Then he was hanging from his feet sheer over the gulf, and before him was a window, wreathed in smoke; and in the smoke was a screaming shape, and beyond the screaming shape was writhing fire.

For a single moment he hung there, then with a twist of all his frame he swung toward the window, yelling madly for the shape to grasp his hands. Again and again he swung thru the air like a pendulum, yelling, "Coward! fool! Lean far out! Leap and catch hold of me!" And above him tendons cracked, muscles quivered, and teeth grated in pain. The two men who held him were drawn over with their breasts flat on the cornice. Both were cursing in the agony of the strain. The next moment the captain himself was in the rain gutter and had the fingers of his powerful right hand knit around one of the Branded Man's ankles. "He's the best ever!" the old man was whispering to himself. "The very best ever!"

The Branded Man swung widely and more widely, yelling commands, taunts, jeers at the shape in the window. Then, at the end of a yet wilder twist and swing, his big hands smote and closed upon the outstretched wrists of the screaming shape in the smoke-wreathed window. With the next instant the figure swung outward and hung danglingly in the space below him, and the Branded Man, gripping the creature's wrists as with claws of iron, looked down into the wild eyes of Sanny's and Tizzie's father, the Unpardonable One!

For a moment he was stunned by the monstrous situation. He blinked dully at the pallid, smoke-streaked face below him. He needed but to unclasp his fingers a half inch and the man he had dreamed a thousand times of killing would rush downward thru more than one hundred feet of air, and crush against the pavement, a lifeless mass of pulp. But, strangely, he could not unclasp his fingers; the instinct to save human life, resident in every cell and molecule, seemed to freeze his fingers to the other's wrists. He stared at the pitiful countenance below him, the eyes wide and awful with terror, the bloodless expanse of chin and cheek and forehead, the mouth that shook with cries that were without syllables or sense, and he did not let go. Distorted as was the Perjurer's face, the faces of Sanny and Tizzie leaped out of it, and he saw them clear and luminous, as one might look at something held inside the soul.

Six powerful hands were now tugging him upward by the feet; he heard the dull crunch of straining joints, the gurgle and catch of breath in lungs flattened upon the cornice above him; he saw glimmeringly a multitude of objects swimming at the bottom of the abyss beneath, and off to the right and left and in the open square a thousand faces, now white with open mouths from which came no sounds; he felt flesh being torn from his legs on the edge of the cornice, he heard the sockets of his joints crack, and hoarse, bellowing commands coming thru what seemed the sobbing of a sea. But he held hard to the life dangling under him, for he was listening to a voice, deep within him.

He heard Tizzie saying, "An' if you see my fazzer you will send him home, won't you?" And the Branded Man clung to the wrists below him desperately.

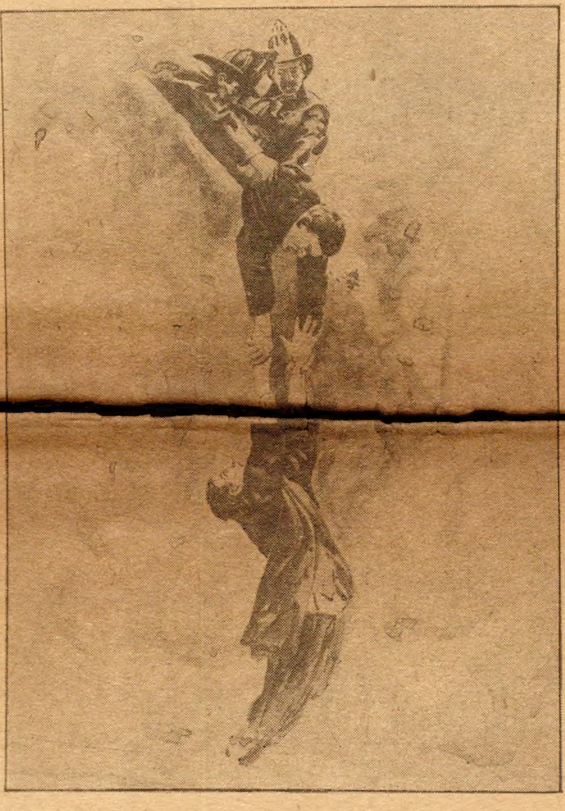
Then, almost as he cried out, he was dragged back to the rain gutter, and the clawing fingers of the captain and the two firemen set themselves into the arms and hair and shoulders of the Perjurer, and he was snaked mercilessly up over the cornice on to the tiles. Then both he and the Branded Man were seized and dragged over the wall to the roof.

"Drop the lines over the edge, get down from here," he heard the captain shouting. "Steady those two men and help them down!"

The Branded Man stumbled toward the fire escape by which he had climbed to the roof. He felt a hand gripping his arm; the sky looked to him like brown-green rust and seemed turning as on a pivot. As he went down thru the curling smoke he at first picked out the steel rungs with the slow precision of a drunken man, then his head began to clear, and he saw that there was a fireman on the ladder close below him, watching him, and one on the inner side of the ladder, ready to grasp him.

"I'm all right, boys; everything has come clear," he finally said. He looked upward and amid the flapping vapors saw the Perjurer, smutted and disheveled, being guided down the escape. "And I didn't kill him? I—I saved him?" he asked himself, as one who questions the truth of some marvel.

As his feet met the earth he heard a dull, thunderous crash within the building, and fire spurted from the windows as if blown by a hundred blast pipes. There was a wide-sweeping, horrified shout, but the Branded Man gave it no heed; he was waiting for the Perjurer. As the rescued man reached the earth a blackened, fierce face came toward him swiftly and a hand gripped his shoulder savagely.



As He Glared at the Man Below Him, There Came to Him the Clang of Closing Cell Doors.

"Give this man to me," were the Branded Man's words, harsh, peremptory, grating. "I know him. His wife and children are waiting for him. I'll see that he reaches home!"

Out from the turmoil and confusion of the fight, out thru the gaping, swaying crowds, he pushed rather than led the man he had saved. Straight down toward the southward running car line he took him. When they were near the track he turned the Perjurer roughly toward him and looked in his frightened face. The features of the Branded Man were like smutted iron.

"There's an innocent little boy and girl down there along the lake, and a pale woman. They want you. Your business in this world hereafter will be to make them happy, just that and nothing more! Dou you comprehend?" His words were like his face, implacable, hard as granite.

The Perjurer's blue eyes dwelt on the fierce brown eyes before him shrinkingly. He was shaking all over. "Yes," he said, and swallowed like one who is parched. "Yes, I know, but you—you——" His eyes welled full of tears and he reached out two trembling hands.

The Branded Man drew back and waved him off. "Stop!" he said. "There can be no sentiment between us. I give your life, not to you, but to the two little kids and the woman. Tomorrow is Christmas; you know what I mean. Now, go!"

He turned away abruptly and went back toward the fire.

That evening when darkness had fallen he went down to Make-believe Park. He turned in on a side street and walked slowly thru the shadows, glancing keenly and expectantly at each glowing window that he passed. In several brilliantly lighted houses he caught glimpses of scenes that smote him like music, glittering Christmas trees and romping children and laughing grown people. But he went on, still looking at the windows keenly and expectantly. Presently he came to a house that was smaller than the others in the row, and there within he saw Sanny and Tizzie dancing in the glow about a spangled tree. He caught his breath and stood still, laughing unconsciously. The two were capering like madcaps. In their hands were the gifts that he had sent them, and there were other gifts scattered about; looking at the children and the tree, but most at the children, were a man and a woman; the man was clinging to the woman's hand and the woman's face was radiant. Seeing this, the Branded Man stood watching but a moment longer, then he walked briskly away. As he passed by Make-believe Park he paused and glanced over at the small sand dunes, lying in quiet under a thin coverlet of snow; then he went onward; and as he turned a corner he thrust his hands in his pockets and looked up at the stars and began whistling.

* * *

HER BUSY DAY.

THE stenographer is speaking.

"It makes me weary to look at this notebook of mine. Honest, I been so rushed with work the last couple of months I don't know which way to turn. I bet I got as many as two hundred pages of notes that I ain't had time to write up yet. I'm going to count 'em.

"There, now, there's seventy-five pages that I've written. Goodness knows when I ever will get the rest finished.

"Whose annunciator is that? Young Thompson's? Say, I'm crazy about that kid. Where are my pencils? I'm going to answer his call.

"Yes, Mr. Reynolds, I'm going to write that lease for you just the minute I get time to. I'd have done it yesterday only I was so busy—honest, I've been rushed to death the last couple of months. I don't hardly know which way to turn.

"Did you say that wasn't Thompson's bell that rung? Well, I guess I got too much work to take it, anyway.

"It's that man Gray, is it? Well, he's got his nerve with him, ringing at this time in the morning. I told him last night I wouldn't have time to take any more dictation of his this morning, because I wouldn't finish what I got till noon and he'd have to wait until I got round to it. A firm like this ought to keep enough stenographers to do the work and if it doesn't it's gotter take the consequences. Anybody that wants to can tell 'em so from me.

"Yes, Miss Murphy, if it's any of your business I'm fully aware that I was a half hour late this morning, but at the best I don't know that it's any of your business, so you could notice it.

"Well, as I was saying, Miss Peterson, Mr. Henry rung his bell the very first thing this morning when I came in, never giving me even time to wash my hands or anything——

"Yes, Mr. Horner, I'm aware that I have those circular letters of yours. I'm going to write them just as soon as I get time, but when a person's rushed to death from morning until night and folks piling on the work till you hardly know which way to turn——

"If that man Gray doesn't quit ringing his bell I'm going to send for the police. I should think he'd get tired of my having to tell him that I simply cannot take any more work until I finish this.

"No, Mr. Gray, I simply can't take any more dictation till I finish what I've already got on my book. I'm sure I can't help it if it is only two short letters. The men here have got to realize that if they won't keep enough stenographers to do the work they've simply got to take the consequences and you can tell them so from me.

"Mr. Maynard, come over here a minute, won't you? I've got something to show you. No, honest, I ain't kiddin'. Come on and take a chance. Sure, you'd like to see it. It's a dandy bunch of snapshots.

"No, I ain't going to make any copy of them for you. I've got enough to do as it is. You come on and look at these pictures.

"Sit right down in the wastebasket. Sure, it'll hold you. I've sat in it billions of times. What if it does break? I should worry! The firm can make a noise like it was prosperous and get another one.

"Mr. Parker, you might just as well take that long copy away. I've got enough work to do without having a thing like that unloaded on me. Want to see some dandy snapshots? Sure you do. Be a sport. Who cares about the old copy anyway? Maybe we'll all get struck by lightning or the building will burn down or something nice like that and then it won't ever have to be made.

"Sure, there's plenty of room. You can sit on the radiator and Mr. Maynard can pass the shots along to you and you can pass 'em back to me. Ain't that the nifty little arrangement?

"Say, if that man Gray doesn't quit ringing his bell—honest, he gets me so nervous——

"Yes, that's me. Fright, what? You wouldn't never know me hardly, would you?

"My friend? Well, I should say not. Look at the nose on him.

"No, Mr. Gray. I cannot take those letters until I finish the work I got on my book now. I've got all the work I can do and then some. Well, what if I ain't doing it right now? I got it to do just the same, haven't I?

"There goes another annunciator! I wish to goodness they'd take that board out. It makes me so nervous.

"Who did you say it was? Young Thompson? Say, get out of the way, folks. Here's where I get busy.

"Hand me my powder rag, will you? It's in back of those papers.

"Say, shut up, will you? Well, what if my cheeks are pink? You know just as well as I do that I don't never use anything of the kind.

"Young Thompson? Sure, I'm crazy about him. All the girls are. Watch Murphy now. She's getting ready to beat me to it. Watch me fool her.

"No, Mr. Gray, I can't do it until maybe some time later in the day. Just now I've got to take some very important work for Mr. Thompson."

* * *

His Plea.

A NEGRO who was well known to the judge had been haled into court on a charge of having struck a relative with a brick. After the usual preliminaries, says Everybody's Magazine, the court inquired:

"Why did you hit this man?"

"Jedge, he called me a black rascal."

"Well, you are one, aren't you?"

"Yessah, maybe I is one. But, Jedge, s'pose some one should call you a black rascal, wouldn't you hit 'em?"

"But I'm not one, am I?"

"Naw, sah; naw, sah; you ain't one; but s'p'ose some one'd call you de kind of rascal you is, what'd you do?"

The Horn of Death

By May Wynne

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"GHOSTS? Of course I believe in ghosts," laughed Diana gaily. "But you don't really mean that there is a real live ghost here, do you?"

"Not exactly here," replied Hugh Bessington, smiling back into her hazel eyes, "but we sport a family ghost, of course; have you never heard of it?"

"Never, but do tell me; it is just the time and place for a ghost, isn't it?"

Her companion leaned back in his chair, surveying the picture—or as much of it as was visible in the winter twilight.

They were seated in a corner of the great oak-paneled hall which had been the pride of many generations of the Virginia Bessingtons of Bessington Manor; trophies of the chase and old portraits adorned the walls, but Hugh was not looking at them. He saw the girl seated in the wide, big, carved chair opposite, the ruddy flames of the log fire lighting up her pretty, piquant face with its clustering curls and soft hazel eyes. How his heart beat as he watched her sitting there, with one tiny foot stretched out half resting on the back of the great deer-hound who lay enjoying the warmth of the crackling fire. He longed to take her in his arms and tell her he loved her, and instead, she demanded this idiotic ghost story.

"There's not much to tell," he said with a forced laugh. "It concerns a wild Bessington who lived in Revolutionary days, and who earned the sobriquet of 'Black Tony.' He seems to have been a pretty reckless, devil-may-care sort of fellow, whose only enduring passion was hunting. He owned a mare which was the envy of the countryside, and he always boasted that she would never refuse any leap he chose to put her to. Just near the quarries there is a fence—nothing very formidable—with a deep pit the other side and a wood beyond it, and on the left. You know the place?"

"Yes, yes, quite well; Anthony pointed it out to me the other day when we were hunting; there is a gate just to the right."

"That's the place. Well, Black Tony swore he would leap the fence, pit and all, and sound his horn at the same time.

"The mare rose to the task with all the determination of a lady with her reputation at stake, but the sound of the horn so startled her that she swerved, and both she and her rider were dashed to pieces at the bottom of the pit—which was an old, disused quarry of great depth."

"Poor Black Tony."

"Probably deserved what he got from all accounts, but he has had his revenge on future generations, for, immediately before the death of any Bessington the sound of his horn is heard, as it was that fatal day when death overtook him in the old quarry."

"How horrible—have you ever heard it?"

"No—I believe it is most audible to the doomed man."

"But, is it different from any other horn?"

Hugh Bessington rose. "Here is the original," he replied, taking down an old-fashioned silver horn from the wall. "Yes, it has a curiously sweet note; shall I show you?"

"No, no. I—don't want to talk of it any more. I hate ghosts; let's talk of something else."

Her companion was standing nearer to her now, the twilight hour, the nervous fear in the childish face, the intoxication of her near presence all inspired him with a sudden courage mingled with mad desire.

But as the girl understood the purport of the words which he stammered forth so incoherently, her pretty face flushed crimson with surprised embarrassment.

"Oh, please," she cried. "You mustn't, no, indeed, you mustn't."

"But I love you; you must have known it, and you were not angry, Diana—my dearest——"

But she, too, had risen, rosy-red with shy confusion.

"I must explain," she faltered. "Altho he asked me to tell no one till his mother knew, I am engaged to your brother—to Anthony."

He repeated the words dully, not grasping the meaning. "To Anthony?"

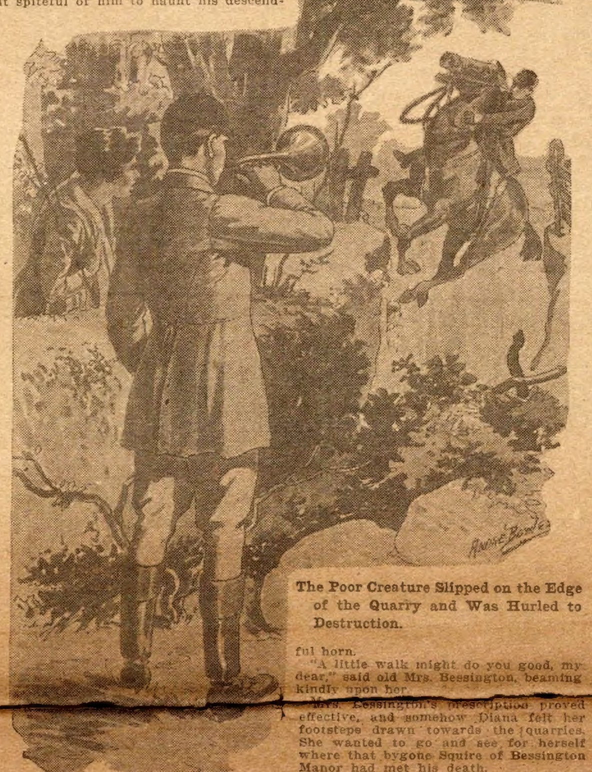
"Yes, to Anthony—only this afternoon. And when we came in, your mother was out driving, and she must be the first—but, but——"

"What! All in the dark?" cried a strong masculine voice from the staircase. "Is that you, Diana? Come here, sweetheart, the mater wants to see you."

She had sprung forward eagerly at the sound of his voice, glad to escape from the difficult situation; something in her future brother-in-law's face had made her afraid, but the feeling passed as she felt her lover's strong arm round her slender waist, and looked up with a joyous little thrill into the bronzed handsome face with its tender gray eyes.

"What were you talking to Hugh about, little one?" he said, half jealously, when they were out of ear-shot. "You both seemed——"

"It was your family ghost story," she interrupted lightly. "Do you know I could not help feeling sorry for Black Tony, he sounded such a man. But I call it spiteful of him to haunt his descendants like that. They couldn't help his being killed."



The Poor Creature Slipped on the Edge of the Quarry and Was Hurled to Destruction.

Bessington laughed. "He has never troubled me," he said.

A glorious December morning—from a huntsman's point of view—and a prettier sight it would have been hard to find than the group gathered about the great door of Bessington Manor. The sun shone down brightly on pink coats and gay faces, for this was one of the most popular meets of the season, as Anthony Bessington was the most popular master.

How handsome and sportsman-like he looked, thought Diana, with a glad thrill of love and pride, as he stood on the steps speaking to several friends who had dismounted, holding their horses by their bridles. Rosy with blushes she stood beside him, receiving their congratulations with a pretty shyness, for she was scarcely 18 and had not acquired the sang-froid of the twentieth century demoiselle.

"And how is it that you are not hunting today, Miss Gaythorne?" asked the courtly old Robert Albury. "I think I have seen you in the field before?"

"Oh, yes," she replied. "I love it, but I had such a bad headache that I thought I would rest today. I want to get it quite well by this evening—it is the Hunt ball, you know."

He paid her a graceful compliment upon the certainty of being able to name her as the belle of the evening and hastily mounted as the huntsman's horn sounded near.

"Good-by, sweetheart," was Anthony's farewell. "By the bye, where's Hugh?"

"I saw him a moment ago," she replied. "He is riding Croisette, and I think she was rather fresh. I expect he was afraid of upsetting some of the other horses."

He waved his hand and the next moment was gone, whilst Diana stood, shading her eyes to see the last of the gay company and listening to the echo of the horses' hoofs and the merry jingle of bridles.

"There is nothing like hunting—nothing," she sighed. "I almost wished I had gone, but my head was so bad this morning. I think it must have been those horrid dreams. I wish Hugh had not told me the family ghost tale."

It was certainly Diana's regret nearly all the morning, and her headache seemed to grow worse, combined as it was with a vague and unreasonable nervous depression. She could think of nothing but Hugh and Black Tony's fateful horn.

"A little walk might do you good, my dear," said old Mrs. Bessington, beaming kindly upon her.

Mrs. Bessington's prescription proved effective, and somehow Diana felt her footsteps drawn towards the quarries. She wanted to go and see for herself where that bygone Squire of Bessington Manor had met his death.

"They will soon be home now," she said to herself, as she paused in the shadow of the little wood—such a dreary winter wood, with no murmur of voices save the rustling of dead leaves in the breeze.

"Yes," she comforted herself, as a spasm of fear shook her. "The hunt must soon be over—and he is sure to ride home this way, and we can go together by the bridle path." A happy smile dimpled her cheek at the thought.

"Poor Hugh," she whispered involuntarily. "Poor Hugh—I must always be very kind to him—I do hope it was not my fault but I never thought—of him."

She little knew that Hugh was close to her, tho he had not seen her. Yet he was thinking of her too as he crouched there, on the other side of the hedge, with a curious old-fashioned horn gripped in his hand.

"She would love me if it were not for Anthony," the devil within was tempting him with. "She will love me—when she has forgotten Anthony."

His pulses throbbed tempestuously, as he recalled the vision of a girl's face looking up at him from the framing of a carved oak chair. How he had longed to hold her in his arms, tightly, tightly—and she belonged to Anthony—yes, to Anthony, just as surely as one day she would belong to him. Once again he gripped the silver horn. So, unseen by each other those two waited for the man who came riding blithely across the fields towards them.

There was a smile on Anthony Bessington's face as he rode, the smile of a man who goes home to pleasure rather than of the one who rides away from it—yet altho he was a keen sportsman, and the run had been a successful one that day, he wanted to see Diana again.

"Hard luck for Hugh, Croisette falling lame so early in the day," he thought. "He looked sulky enough over it, too, poor chap. I wonder what Di has been doing with herself; it's a good thing she did not come; it has been a hard day."

He was now close to the fence—he had not seen Diana standing in the wood on his left.

"Steady, old woman," he said, patting his mare's neck, and set her at the fence to the right of Black Tony's fatal quarry. Clear and sweet rang out the notes of a horn as the mare gathered herself together for the leap. And, at the sound, even Anthony Bessington grew pale, so silvery, so insistent, so unmistakable was the sound. The reins fell upon the animal's neck even as she swerved in sudden fear at the unexpected sound, and the next moment, with a scream of terror, the poor creature slipped on the edge of the quarry, and was hurled to destruction beneath.

A man's figure rose up hurriedly from behind the fence. Only one saw his face as he ran, his knees trembling beneath him in a sudden remorseful agony. But, as Diana looked into his face, her heart grew sick with horror. She understood.

He did not see her as he fled, striving as he went to realize all that he had accomplished, to assure himself that he had succeeded beyond his most glowing expectations.

His rival lay huddled and lifeless at the bottom of Black Tony's quarry, and he, as the master of Bessington Manor, would woo and win his brother's love. Yes, it was good, altogether good, that sudden inspiration of mushroom growth—yet why did he shudder as he came in sight of the old gray manor? It seemed to him that the echo of that horn still rang clear and sweet in his ears.

And meantime he little dreamed that where he had thought to leave only death, love lingered too.

White to the lips, yet with every fiber of her being alive to the necessity for courage, Diana Gaythorne knelt over the abyss and back into her face looked the eyes of Anthony Bessington as he hung, gripping to a ledge, some few feet below her. She noticed every detail with the strained vision of a moment's glance. The knotted veins of his strong hands, the perspiration on his forehead, the brave smile in the gray eyes, the set determination of his mouth, and, above all, the slight loosening of the ledge of rock to which he held.

"If I can fetch help," she muttered thickly.

"It will be too late," he whispered back, very tenderly. "No, little sweetheart, it is good-by—good-by—did you not hear my home-call?"

Her eyes blazed. "It was no ghost who sounded that horn," she replied. "I . . . I saw him go."

If he understood he gave no sign, but a faint color returned to his cheeks.

"Still, the call came," he said, "and it is good-by—darling, darling——"

Thru the gloom his eyes looked lovingly up into hers. But she had risen, a desperate woman with all of life trembling below her on the brink of destruction.

With hurried, nervous fingers she was unwinding the long, thick muffler she wore round her throat.

"A few minutes," she prayed. "Only a few minutes."

She had knotted the ends of her improvised rope to the trunk of a strong sapling which grew near. Gracious Heavens! If it might only reach. In agony she leaned over again.

"Can you?" she whispered, and told him her plan.

He smiled, tho there was little hope in his face. Would the rock hold firm while he raised his other arm to seize the dangling muffler above him?

A breathless moment and then——

"Ah!" gasped Diana as she saw him catch the rope in a strong grip even as the ledge of stone gave way, falling with dull, resounding thuds far below.

Backwards and forwards swung the desperate man, slowly ascending hand over hand, while the muffler grew more frayed and strained as he neared the top.

The sound of many waters was in Diana's ears, a mist swam before her eyes as she lay stretching out her arms to clasp the man swaying there in the evening gloom.

She was clutching, dragging with all the strength of her young muscles, and then, then—a sound of something snapping, a mighty spring forward, and Anthony lay upon the grassy edge of the quarry with Diana fainting in his arms.

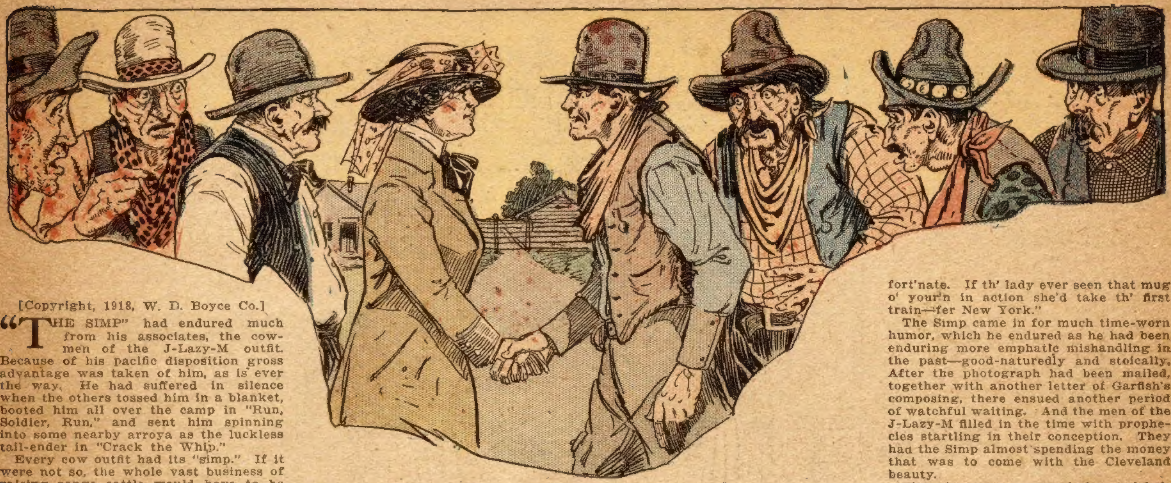
It was almost dark when they reached the Manor to find everything in confusion. Vague rumors of misfortune were current upon the air, grooms and stablemen were already scouring the country in search of their missing master. Mrs. Bessington, white and fearful, stood leaning upon Hugh's arm.

"Anthony, my Anthony," sobbed Mrs. Bessington, "the terror we have been in, and that foolish Simmons declared he heard the horn—Black Tony's horn." She was clinging to him as she spoke, and when they looked round again, Hugh was gone.

The good people of Bessington still have it that Black Tony's horn was truly heard on that December evening, but Anthony Bessington laughs as he draws his fair young wife to his side, saying that love is ever stronger than curses—or ghosts, too, for that matter. As for the true story, no one ever knew of it, save the three actors, tho people wonder why the younger Bessington went to the Philippines so suddenly, and why young Mrs. Bessington is so loath to speak of him.

But no one will ever know the truth—or even why Mr. Bessington looks grim when a chance mention is made of Black Tony's leap.

The Garfish Picks on "The Simp" as a Butt for His Joke and It Is His Undoing



The Simp Noted in a Dazed Way That Her Photograph Had Not Done Her Full-blown Beauty Justice.

Money in the Mail

By Albert William Stone

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"THE SIMP" had endured much from his associates, the cowmen of the J-Lazy-M outfit. Because of his pacific disposition gross advantage was taken of him, as is ever the way. He had suffered in silence when the others tossed him in a blanket, booted him all over the camp in "Run, Soldier, Run," and sent him spinning into some nearby arroya as the luckless tail-ender in "Crack the Whip."

Every cow outfit had its "simp." If it were not so, the whole vast business of raising range cattle would have to be revolutionized. And in the J-Lazy-M the one to be saddled with the doubtful honor, was Horace G. Quinn.

"A cowman with such a handle as that orter be willin' to have it changed," opined the Garfish, he of the perennial attack of love-sickness and all appurtenances. "I was born in th' cow country, an' I'm willin' to bet a month's wages that no puncher ever stuck with any outfit three days in a row with any such dawggoned misfit of a name as 'Horace'. It jest can't be did."

So they rechristened Horace G. Quinn "The Simp." He did not resent it. As a rider and roper there was none better on the Hardscrabble, a fact which the others acknowledged—when the Simp was out of earshot. In his presence, they insisted that he didn't know a broncho from an alligator. Strange to say, he did not take issue with them. In time they grew to learn that, for once they had actually drawn an incredibly unsophisticated victim upon whom to practice their wiles.

It was the Garfish who first conceived the idea of putting the Simp in touch with some lovelorn maiden in one of our effete, Eastern cities. The eight other members of the outfit usually looked askance upon any project proposed by Garfish, since experience had taught them that playing volley ball with dynamite was safer. But in this instance the temptation was irresistible. The procedure was likewise simple in the extreme.

"I wouldn't have no use fer a woman," he grinned, when the Garfish and his crew approached him with the project. "What would a female want with such a maverick as I be?"

"You ain't goin' at life right," the Garfish informed him. He pointed to an advertisement. "Read that," he commanded.

Slowly the Simp, who was no scholar, spelled out the words in the paper Garfish handed him:

"Wanted—To correspond with a young man, Western preferred. Must be good-natured and of loving disposition. Need not have money, as I have enough for both. Object, matrimony. Address Box Z 203, Cleveland, Ohio."

"Yuh see?" exclaimed the Garfish triumphantly. "Here's a lone female woman, prob'ly young an' good-lookin', jest achin' fer a chanst to meet a 'Western young man.' An' she says she's got enough money fer both o' yuh. Ain't that allurin'?"

"Allurin' enough," conceded the Simp, running his fingers thru his rusty hair and grinning painfully. "But—look at me! Who'd want to take up with my red hair an' bow laigs?—answer me that."

"She don't say nothin' about looks," reminded the Garfish, pointing to the advertisement in proof. "'Must be good-natured an' of lovin' disposition,' it says. That's you—good natured an' lovin'. I'll testify to it, myself. So'll all th' rest of th' boys."

"But—how am I gonna git into touch with this here female?"

"Easy. All yuh gotta do is to write a letter to th' address given in th' ad. She'll git it; an' th' rest, yuh kin leave to her." The Garfish spoke with authority. "Like as not she's worth a million dollars."

The Simp protested feebly that he was no scribe; whereupon the Garfish agreed to write the initial letter for him.

"That'll give yuh an openin'," he explained. "Yuh kin write th' rest yourself. Git her interested once, an' she won't pay no attention to your writin' after that. Her curiosity'll protect yuh."

The letter was written that night in the bunk-house, the Garfish laboriously penning the epistle, while the others crowded around and offered advice. There was considerable hilarity as an accompaniment; but the Simp, in the simplicity of his soul, attributed it to the natural levity that goes with such things. In a slow way he was beginning to be interested.

The envelope was posted next morning, decorating the outer flap of the rural delivery box. Shortly before noon the gray-clad delivery man rescued it. As a privileged minion of Uncle Sam he read the superscription and grinned widely.

"'Nother puncher bit," he said to himself. "Th' durn fools will never learn, seems like."

Cleveland was a considerable distance from the Hardscrabble and the associates of the Simp whiled away the interim by regaling him with tales of other conquests thru the mail.

"Yuh see," explained Shorty Robinson, "'tain't gittin' th' girl that counts so much. Girls kin be got most anywheres, except at th' North Pole. It's th' money they brings with 'em, that oils th' matrimonial machinery; savvy?

"Now, this here girl you're writin' to prob'ly lives in high society in Cleveland, 'n she's good an' tired of it. Wants to git out West, where there's room to move around an' breathe. I've read about 'em, many a time. They think a cow puncher's the biggest thing in th' scenery. Why, there was Jake Hampton——"

And Shorty Robinson launched forth on a tale, the ramifications of which would have made a professional Persian story teller blush with envy. He related instances wherein forty-dollar-a-month cowmen had drawn matrimonial prizes with huge fortunes.

"Where they livin' now?" demanded the Simp at one point. "Dunno's I ever heard tell of any of 'em on th' Hardscrabble."

"Course not," Shorty agreed. "Yuh don't reckon they're crazy enough to stick in this God-forsaken part of th' country after they got aholt o' that big money, do yuh?"

"But," stammered the Simp, "I thought yuh said these here rich wimmin fell fer th' punchers because they wanted to live in th' West——"

"That was before they seen it, yuh simp," interrupted Shorty witheringly. Whereupon the Simp obediently subsided, without asking why his immediate associates didn't seize the same opportunity they had so generously offered to him.

When the answer came, the Simp knew it by its Cleveland postmark. The envelope was cream colored. It exuded a faint perfume, thus indicating its feminine origin. The simple heart of Horace G. Quinn missed a beat or so when the mailman delivered the missive into his horny paw. He retired to a secluded place behind the barn to peruse it.

The chirography, while satisfyingly feminine and dainty, proved to be too complicated for the Simp's limited schooling. His companions knew that it would be, and bided their time with grins. They were not surprised when the recipient came forth, and crooked a finger at the Garfish.

"Yuh got me into this," he explained when the Garfish, features suspiciously composed, had joined him. "Yuh'll have to read fer me."

The Garfish took the proffered sheet, and held it to his retrousse nose.

"Smells all right," he judged. "Yuh kin generally tell by th' smell of th' first letter whether th' girl's a real live one 'r not. This one seems to be all O. K."

He read off the message with comparative rapidity. He had read many others similar to it, but of this the Simp was happily ignorant.

"Dear Mr. Quinn," it said. "I received your nice letter, and I want to thank you for it. It was quite the nicest letter of all that I received in answer to my advertisement. ('Get that?' interjected the Garfish proudly. 'Yuh kin thank me fer winnin' out in this here game.')

"I am interested in the West, and would love to come out there. One becomes so weary of society life, you know.

"If you will send me your photograph, I will also send you mine. Then we can get acquainted better, don't you think?

"I never did a thing like this before. Please answer as soon as possible. I am as ever yours, Miriam Sturdevant."

The Garfish folded up the sheet and handed it back to the Simp. "Things is comin' your way," he stated with conviction. "That's jest th' kind o' letter Bill Spears, down at the Circle-Dot, got two years ago. Bill's now in New York, livin' on Fifth avenoo an' th' fat of th' land, whatever that is. He copped out an heiress worth a couple o' million bucks."

The Simp listened with dropped jaw. He was impressed with the ease with which money could be obtained thru the mail, and said so. The Garfish went back to the others and repeated the contents of the letter.

"Jest like all th' rest of 'em," Pete Frost chuckled. "This is gittin' richer all th' time. Next thing she'll write him fer railroad fare out here. That'll thicken up things some."

The Simp had no photograph of himself, and announced shyly that he contemplated riding into Lossen Valley to have one taken. Slim Baxter, who was the homeliest man in the outfit—not even barring the Simp—offered to loan one of his own. The Simp bristled with the first assumption of anger they had ever seen him show.

"This here lady said she wanted to see a pict'er of me, didn't she?" he demanded. "Well, that's what she's gonna see. If she ain't satisfied with my mug, she'd better find it out now than later, when it might break her heart."

"Look out yuh don't break th' camera," the Garfish could not resist saying as the Simp rode off on his errand. It was wasted wit.

When the pictures arrived, it was immediately observed that they did not flatter the subject in the least. The Simp had heightened the Western effect by leaving on his sombrero, with his well-plastered hair showing strongly under the brim, and his neckerchief looped becomingly below his chin. He had not changed to his Sunday best, for the simple reason that he had none.

"Th' freckles don't show none," Con Henderson commented. "That'll help. An' yuh kept your mouth shut, which is fort'nate. If th' lady ever seen that mug o' your'n in action she'd take th' first train—fer New York."

The Simp came in for much time-worn humor, which he endured as he had been enduring more emphatic mishandling in the past—good-naturedly and stoically. After the photograph had been mailed, together with another letter of Garfish's composing, there ensued another period of watchful waiting. And the men of the J-Lazy-M filled in the time with prophecies startling in their conception. They had the Simp almost spending the money that was to come with the Cleveland beauty.

That she was a person of ultra-pulchritude was proven beyond doubt—to the Simp—when her photograph arrived, together with a letter that fairly gushed her gratification.

"Your photo shows you to be not so handsome as rugged," it said. "I love manliness as exemplified in masculine strength. And your costume—tell me, do you wear it all the time? Because I've been told by my friends that the cowboys of the West do not wear clothes any different than the workingmen of the East, in reality. Why, you looked just like the moving picture heroes."

The photograph of Miss Sturdevant showed her to be a brunette of pronounced type. Her eyes were blue—or so a written description on the back said—and her teeth, as exhibited in her smile, were even and good to look at. She had a chin which was more firm than round, indicating that she possessed not a little will of her own.

"She's layin' it on pretty thick," commended Shorty Robinson with a trace of envy in his tone.

"Never mind," consoled the Garfish. "The higher she sends him with that kind of stuff, the harder he'll git throwed when trimmin' time comes. You watch."

The correspondence between Miss Sturdevant of Cleveland, and the Simp of Hardscrabble, went on. In the meantime the members of the outfit were distracted somewhat by other news that was in the brewing. William Murdock, the owner of J-Lazy-M, was dickering for the disposal of the ranch, lock, stock and barrel. The information was disseminated by Con Henderson, the erstwhile foreman.

"The' old man's gittin' tired o' raisin' cattle, an' wants to quit," he said. "He's put th' ranch on th' market, an' Jim Blatcher's talkin' of takin' it over. How'll yuh like that?"

There was a chorus of protests. Jim Blatcher, whose ranch adjoined the J-Lazy-M, was not a popular employer of hands. For that reason he usually had considerable trouble in keeping his men, few of whom would remain with him if there was even a faint prospect of obtaining work elsewhere.

In pursuance of the project to sell the ranch, Murdock and Blatcher held several conferences. The first of them were staged in the living-room of the J-Lazy-M ranchhouse. Later, they were transferred to Lossen Valley, the nearest town. From which it was inferred that lubricants were required to oil the business machinery.

Then came the astounding news that, while the two ranches were to be combined, neither Blatcher nor Murdock would continue in control.

"Some New York syndicate o' capitalists is gonna take 'em over," Con Henderson reported one day. "Prob'ly they'll hire some big cowman to take charge."

"Jest my chanst," announced the Garfish, whose belief in his own dormant powers of execution had ever been extraordinary. "Who's th' gent yuh applies to fer th' job?"

Con Henderson stated coldly that he had already placed his own application, and refused to divulge the means he had employed to do it. Thereafter ensued sundry secret conferences between the members of the outfit, and, in the end, the Garfish was selected to call on the old man. He was received in the living-room of the ranchhouse, and stated his errand at once.

"We want it straight, boss," said the Garfish. "If th' ranch is to be sold, we orter know it. Some of th' boys will have other plans, yuh see."

"I see," remarked Murdock. He smiled. "Well, of course you understand this proposition's a secret, so far. We don't want it to leak out. But I don't mind tellin' yuh that this here ranch is gonna be sold, sooner or later. Maybe sooner."

"Who's gonna buy it?"

"I don't know—yet."

"Some o' th' boys says it's a syndicate in New York," said the Garfish. "That means, maybe, that somebody'll git a job managin'. Would yuh mind——"

"I ain't tellin' nothin' more'n I've already told yuh," interrupted Murdock. "If any of yuh want to change jobs, now's your time."

William Murdock had always been an independent soul, where his help was concerned. He sometimes explained that his independence was directly responsible for the fact that he seldom was short of cowmen in the critical seasons, when a full complement of help was essential.

The Garfish reported back a few minutes later. "It's a syndicate, all right," he declared. "An' they're sendin' their own man out from New York to take charge."

The statement was pure camouflage, to be sure; but the Garfish flattered himself that the time was ripe for "strategy," the value of which had once been elaborately explained by Slim Baxter, his erstwhile chum. His scheme bid fair to bear immediate fruit.

"Then I'm gonna quit," announced Shorty Robinson in disgust. "I ain't gonna take orders from no slick-haired mamma's boy; d'yuh git me?"

The others declaimed profanely that they were of similar opinions. It was unanimously agreed that the new manager should be confronted with a void, where lusty and vigorous cow punchers once had been. The determination was general that the exodus should take place as soon as the change should be announced.

In the excitement over the impending sale of the ranch, the love affair of the Simp had been temporarily lost from sight. On a morning at breakfast the Simp startled his companions by announcing that his Cleveland sweetheart had concluded to come to Hardscrabble in person.

"When does it happen?" demanded the Garfish.

"What?"

"Why, th' arrival of th' lady?"

The Simp grinningly drew forth the latest epistle from his lady-love, and consulted it with a show of importance.

"She'll git here next Thursday—a week from today," he said. "This here letter tells me that I gotta meet her in Lossen Valley," he added pridefully.

"Did she git yuh to send her th' railroad fare?" asked Pete Frost with a wink at his companions.

The Simp nodded, and exhibited the postal money order receipt in proof; whereat a roar of laughter went around the table. The time for misleading talk was past, now that the Simp had been fleeced. They clapped the victim on the back with hilarious emphasis, and laughed as only cowmen laugh at the misery of another.

"Yuh cert'nly are a simp," declared the Garfish, as soon as he could be heard. "Why, don't yuh know them kind of women is thick as prairie dogs in th' Hardscrabble country?"

The Simp looked at him, and a baleful light began to glimmer in his watery blue eyes.

"Yuh—yuh started me in it," he reminded.

This provoked another roar. In the midst of it, the Simp arose and went out. Two minutes later he could be seen saddling his horse. Another two minutes and he rode thru the front gate, followed by the raucous jeers of his companions. He did not look around.

At sundown he came riding back, dejection showing in every angle of his drooping body.

"I told th' postmaster I'd have him arrested fer swindlin'," he announced in explanation of his absence. "He wouldn't gimme my money back, 'cause he said it had already gone to Cleveland."

The complete acknowledgement of his downfall added the last artistic touch to the delight of the outfit. They rolled in the dust of the ground, heedless of dire results to their clothes and complexions, roaring until William Murdock came out and wanted to know what was the matter. When he heard the joke he grinned with the rest.

"Never mind," he consoled the Simp. "There ain't a cowman on the range that ain't been took in th' same way, in their time. They're all simps when it comes to fallin' fer them women."

"Maybe—maybe she'll come anyhow?" ventured the Simp.

"Sure," laughed the boss, clapping the simple-minded one on the shoulder. "If I were you I'd go to Lossen Valley to meet her, anyway."

The boss offered to give the Simp a ride to town in his big automobile, on the day of the Cleveland society girl's scheduled arrival.

"Yuh don't want to git there covered with alkali," he said with a grin. "Clean up an' come with me. Yuh'll have time to git your hair cut, maybe."

The Simp accepted the invitation, but without enthusiasm. He explained that he was going to the train, merely because he didn't want to overlook any bets.

"Don't seem like a decent girl would rob a poor cow puncher like that," he remarked, provoking the usual confusion of merriment. And in his utter simplicity he rode away with the boss, sitting in the back like a passenger. He made a woeful-looking figure as the machine disappeared in a white cloud of dust.

When the long train pulled in the Simp looked hopelessly at the row of coaches. The machine was drawn up beside the platform. Suddenly he reached over, and gripped the boss by the shoulder.

"Look a-there, Mr. Murdock!" he exclaimed, pointing. "If that ain't my—Miss Sturdevant, I'm a coyote!"

The boss looked. Then, with alacrity, he hopped out of the machine and strode toward a veil-swathed figure which had alighted from one of the Pullmans. The boss held forth his hand in greeting.

"Welcome to Lossen Valley, Miss Sturdevant," he cried. "I've got th' machine right over here. Where's your baggage?"

But Miss Sturdevant had no eyes for the boss. She threw up her veil, and centered her gaze upon the shambling form of the Simp, just behind.

"Mr. Quinn!" she exclaimed. "Is that you?"

"Yes, ma'am," stammered the Simp.

Miss Sturdevant drew a long breath of obvious relief. The Simp noted, in a dazed way, that her photograph had not done her full-blown beauty justice.

"Then it's all right," she said. "We'll be married right away, if you please. I don't want to go out among those rough cowboys—single." She smiled brilliantly at the boss. "I presume there is a preacher, or something, in this town?" she suggested.

The boss swept the ground with his sombrero.

"Sure is," he declared. "We'll have the license in ten minutes. Just hop into my automobile—you two."

The Simp awkwardly helped Miss Sturdevant into the car, and clambered in after her. The boss slammed the door of the driver's seat and pushed the self-starting lever. Under cover of the answering roar, Miss Sturdevant opened her purse and displayed to the Simp's gaze a postal money order upon which his name was inscribed.

"I'm keeping it as evidence that you were not fooling me," she said in his astonished ear.

It was only ten miles to the J-Lazy-M, and the big car covered it after the ceremony in fifteen minutes. It rolled into the yard and came to a stop before the hospitably wide front door. Con Henderson came forward, sombrero in hand.

"Where's th' boys?" demanded the boss.

"They're down to th' bunk-house."

"Tell 'em to come up here, pronto."

They came at the word, the rotund form of the Garfish in the lead. His protruding eyes stared at the two forms in the back seat. The others exhibited equal amazement.

The boss stood up and removed his hat.

"I just want to inform you ornery mavericks that these two persons is Mr. and Mrs. Horace G. Quinn," he said good-naturedly. "They were married twenty minutes ago. I was a witness."

Silence greeted the announcement—for the fraction of an instant only. Then the air was rent with vociferous applause. Mrs. Quinn's kind of beauty compelled spontaneous adulation. The boys tossed their hats into the air, and shouted themselves hoarse.

The boss held up his hand at length. He had something else to say.

"You heard that this ranch was going to change hands," he said in his grandest manner. "I am pleased to say that the transaction has been closed." He pointed at Mrs. Quinn. "There's your new boss."

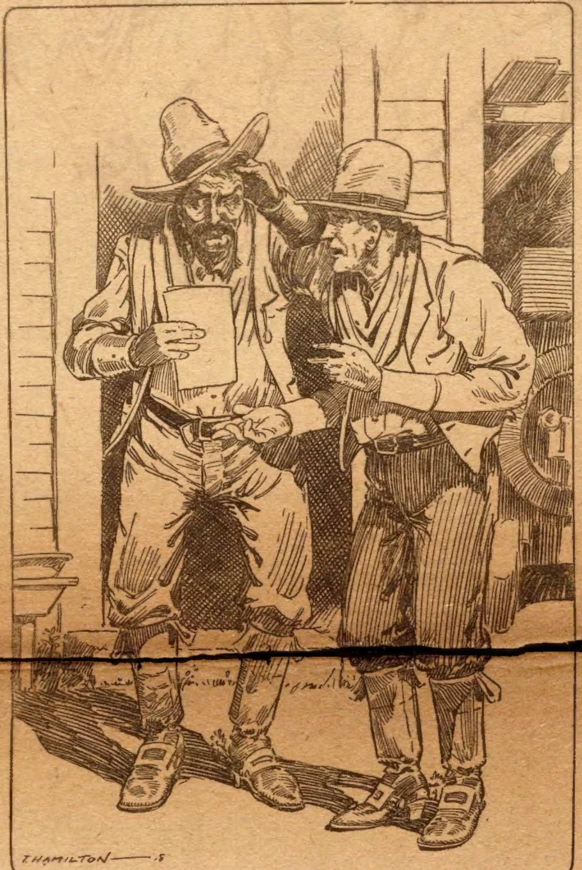
This time, the silence was not broken. The boys were doing some rapid thinking—particularly the Garfish. It included the complications which arise on any cow ranch when a woman is the owner.

And then Mrs. Quinn stood up and smiled. At sight of it, the boys gulped hungrily.

"I am indebted to Mr. Quinn for my presence here," she said musically. "His wonderful descriptions of ranch life decided me to purchase this ranch as soon as I learned that it was for sale."

Pete Frost landed a vicious kick on the right shin of the Garfish, causing that worthy to give a yelp of pain.

"I hope you will all remain with us," Mrs. Quinn continued. Her handsome eyes swept the circle. "My husband, of course, will be your manager," she added.



"Yuh Got Me Into This," He Explained When the Garfish, Features Suspiciously Composed, Had Joined Him.

Does Anybody Understand Music?

"HAVE you got a program?" the pretty young woman asked the sturdy young man as they took their gallery seats at the first popular symphony concert.

"Yes," the sturdy young man said, "but that's all the good it will do me, for I know that it is full of fugues and scherzos and andantes and all the rest of those musical terms that I don't understand."

"But you did understand some of the things in last year's program," she replied. "And I remember how keen you were about the 'Country Wedding.'"

"That was because I was looking forward to a wedding of my own," he answered, giving her a meaning look, but as weddings were a forbidden subject for the time being he hurried on. "Do you know, I think that if this plumbing business ever lets up I'll look into music a bit. Wouldn't you like to understand it?"

"Does anybody ever understand music?" she inquired. "And don't you think it is with music as it is with flowers? You don't have to know botany in order to love flowers. The teacher in the literature class that I joined the other night read us some verses from a great poet, and I remember there were some lines in which the poet said that the meanest flower that grew could give him thoughts that lie too deep for tears, and that is the way with music; the meanest tune that I hear played by a hand organ often gives me thoughts that seem to come from my soul."

"Yes," he said, "I can understand a hand organ, but——"

"Hush," she exclaimed, "the musicians are coming on the stage."

"Anybody would think you were at a play," he laughed.

"It is better than a play, for they are all stars and there are so many of them."

"I must confess," the young man admitted, "that the musicians all look alike to me and, in fact, I never thought of looking at them. I just want to listen."

"Oh!" the pretty young woman remonstrated, keeping her glowing eyes on the arriving musicians, "you miss half the pleasure. I like to watch them touch their instruments. Many of them are so in love with their violins or cellos, or whatever they may play, that they treat them as if they were human."

"And do you think," he demanded, "that they can be satisfied with music as a life partner?"

"You are absurd," she exclaimed. "But listen! They are going to give us one of your andantes."

"It sounds better than it reads," was his comment. "And what's next?"

"'Ave Maria,' with a violin obligato by the first violinist."

"Well," he said, after the famous air was played and repeated, "if hand organ tunes can give you thoughts that lie too deep for tears what did this do to you?"

"Oh," she said, "I didn't think at all. I just felt, and I wished that when my time to die came I might go while such music was being played."

"Pretty smooth work," he answered, "and I don't think he missed a note."

"Neither did I," she replied. "Don't you think it would be a glorious end simply to slip down between the seats and breathe your last while the musicians played?"

"It would make an awful row and fuss," he observed, "but I don't come to concerts to die or to talk about death. And aren't they going to play something lively?"

"Yes. The next is 'Wine, Woman and Song,' and I suppose that will suit you better than the 'Ave Maria.'"

"Well, I should say so. But I have heard this thing before and never for the life of me could understand what it had to do with wine or women or song."

"That's because you don't feel it," she said. "To me it always suggests lovely white wine——"

"Unfermented, I suppose," he laughed, "for I know you don't like any other kind."

"And beautiful women in white satin dresses," she went on, "singing like birds."

"That's not my notion of the thing at all," he admitted, "but I guess you are right, and nobody really does understand music."

Jabez Stone and the Christmas Spirit

By Arnold Young

Gone was the Christmas spirit from his life, and in its place were bitterness and retaliation. Yet, in the end, Jabez saw the light of universal brotherhood.

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IT WAS one of those warmish winter nights, which try the soul. A night for dogs to howl out along the country roads; for the wind to sough thru barren treetops with a dismal whine that made one shiver in spite of the lack of cold. In town, along the main business street, clouds of dust devils obscured the stars from time to time, and sent people scurrying indoors. A night it was for anything except the Christmas spirit, tho Christmas was but three days distant.

Jabez Stone, seated at his parlor window that overlooked one end of Main street, scowled as he watched the swirls of dust sweep by his door and deposit little heaps of refuse along his walk. Old Tim, his only servant and companion, peeping over his shoulder, sighed involuntarily.

"Hain't lookin' much like a white Christmas this year," he cackled.

Jabez let his hand drop from the curtain that he was holding back to get a better view of the street.

"What do I care for your Christmas?" he snarled. "I hate your Christmas. What is it, anyway? Just a time of the year when folks rush around getting presents that they can't afford to buy for others, and grudging the expense when they can. It's a time to grumble over what you get, when you get it, because it don't come up to what you bought. Don't talk to me about Christmas. I'm done with it."

Old Tim regarded him furtively. Jabez had closed his mouth with a snap, and leaned back in his chair. He looked worn and tired even for a man of 65, who had spent the greater part of his life in working like a slave to save money against old age.

"Look at them fools," he went on raucously as he watched the dim, shadowy shapes that flitted in and out of the stores within the range of his vision, "what are they thinking of? Nothin', 'cept how to get a present for fifty cents as 'll look like they spent a dollar." He paused for a moment, stroking his beard reflectively.

Old Tim shivered slightly as the warm room had turned chill.

"Hain't—hain't you goin' to have a Christmas dinner this year?" he asked timidly.

For many years it had been the custom in Jabez Stone's household to have a Christmas dinner for the nieces, nephews and other relatives who lived in Middleton and the surrounding country. Jabez and his wife never had had any children, and when she died Jabez started the annual Christmas celebration in his home. But the children were growing up. Jabez felt, since they did not come to see him during the year, except at very rare intervals, that the Christmas celebration had deteriorated into a mere barter of presents for forced affection.

He was disappointed, and with the disappointment there came suspicion. Jabez was accounted wealthy in Middleton. He owned two large farms along the Springfield road and held most of the property along Main street. On more than one occasion he had overheard whispered speculation on the distribution of his wealth when he died.

Sally Ann, the woman who did his washing every two weeks, often wondered about it audibly in his presence. Like Jabez and his Christmas dinner, Sally Ann was an institution in Middleton. For almost two score years she had done the washing for the well-to-do families in the town, and knew all the little secrets of each and every one of them. It was she who had first put the suspicion in Jabez's mind.

"Mis' Reagan told me her Margie was goin' to some fine young ladies' school in Noo York," she said, as she raised herself from her stooping position over the washboard and dried her hands on the sides of her apron. "'Spect her's gettin' ready to spend all the money her 'spects to get some day." She regarded Jabez a trifle maliciously, and Jabez, in spite of his sear-leaf skin that never showed a trace of color, hoped that Sally Ann hadn't seen the red of anger that mounted to his forehead.

Margie Reagan was one of his nieces—his favorite, in fact—and it galled him to think that she was planning to spend the money he had worked so hard to accumulate, even before he had died. That was why, when Margie threw her arms about him, the previous Christmas, and had seated herself on his knee, he had turned from her coldly.

And now, after a year, with Christmas rolling around again, he suddenly made up his mind to omit the regular Christmas celebration at his house. The idea of bringing joy to those who were waiting for him to die so that they might spend his money, filled him with cold anger. An all-pervading wrath blinded his vision; he fancied that the whole world was awry. People, those that he had loved, as well as those whom he had never known, were just so many human vultures, each ready to pounce down upon the unsuspecting. There was no more love, no more pity, no more godliness.

He thought of Christmas as he had known it in his youth, the charity and kindliness that had marked the day. And then, in contrast, he pictured the cupidity of those nieces and nephews of his. It turned him hard.

"Yes, I hate Christmas," he said with slow emphasis, as his gnarled hand came down emphatically on the arm of his chair. "I hate it. The good has gone out of it. If the Reagans and the rest come here, they'll be fooled. There ain't goin' to be no dinner!" He said this with something like a sob in his voice, and old Tim, unable to look into his master's face any longer, shuffled towards the door.

"Hain't wantin' any hot cocoa 'fore you go t' bed?" he asked.

"No," answer the master sullenly, and old Tim closed the door softly, and went upstairs shaking his head.

"Hain't, like Mister Stone 'tall," he kept repeating to himself as he slowly took one step after another. "No Christmas dinner, no nothin'." He looked around surreptitiously, as tho he feared somebody was watching him, and wiped his eyes on the edge of his sleeve. He felt very sorry for Jabez, for in a measure he sensed the other man's loneliness and heart-break.

So it was that Christmas eve approached and found Jabez bitter and vindictive. By four o'clock, when the first street lamps were beginning to glimmer, he put aside the japanned box and its contents, which he had been contemplating the better part of the day, and grunted with a satisfaction that was not unmixed with contempt. Not more than fifteen minutes earlier Tim had ushered out Stone's lawyer.

"That'll hold 'em a while," he remarked to himself as he gave his hands a dry wash. "Margie ain't goin' to get a cent, and—well, the rest of 'em won't have much more to be thankful for."

He rose from his chair rheumatically, and with the aid of his black walnut cane made his way to the desk that stood in the farthest corner of the room. Into one of the drawers he locked away the box and put the key into its hiding place behind an old picture of his mother that hung directly above the desk. Then he called for old Tim.

The servant came to him from somewhere in the rear of the house. He wore an absurd checkered apron that enveloped his whole shrunken figure and trailed off like a fine lady's train.

"Bring my cap and coat," Jabez requested when the old man appeared. "Guess I'll be takin' a walk 'fore supper. Might as well be watchin' them fools scramble 'round buyin' the last of the Christmas trash."

Five minutes later Jabez was on his way down Main street. A light snow was falling. The wind still howled and blew it into his face. The sidewalks were thronged with people. Here and there Jabez spied a sidewalk faker dancing his puppets backward and forward on the pavement, while a knot of town and country urchins watched him with eyes round with wonder. There were mothers with little children whimpering and clinging to their skirts, as they dragged thru the crowds; youths in cheap clothing, and girls, their faces wan and tired after the day's work, hurrying into the shops to buy cheap trinkets for their friends. It was not a happy crowd; rather its composite face expressed weariness and a desire to have an unwelcome task finished.

Jabez watched them with something of a sneer in his eyes. "Fools, fools," he said over and over to himself, "and this is what they call the Christmas spirit."

An interurban car that ran into Middleton from the smaller hamlets and the country to the north stopped almost directly in front of him. It disgorged more late holiday shoppers. He watched them, hoping desperately that he might see one happy face in all that throng. But there was none. All were drab and fretful. Jabez turned away with a gulp. What had become of the brotherhood of man that He had preached and for which He had given His life?

And then it happened. While Jabez was standing on the edge of the throng the Little One came into his life. In the midst of all his fierce questioning, he suddenly became alert. There, within five feet of him, an automobile swung around the corner heedless of the crowd, its glaring headlights shining on the scared face of a weazened little creature whom Jabez had not noticed before. For Jabez, the rest of the throng vanished; in the few seconds' interval—it seemed like aeons to Jabez—he had sensed the Little One's danger. His cane and the rheumatic pains were forgotten. With incredible celerity he bridged the distance between him and the child and pulled the youngster to safety on the sidewalk. The machine sped on, the throngs on the street paid no heed, but in that moment Jabez, with the child clinging to him piteously, saw the light.

The people hurrying along the streets, and in and out of the stores seemed marvelously changed. As he patted the child's shoulder in an effort to comfort him, he saw the Tired Mother, whose shabby clothing proclaimed her poverty, stopping to look into a shop window bright with vari-colored toys; he saw her open her purse to count the few dimes which she had hoarded during the months before to buy a Christmas toy for her little one.

Farther away he saw the red-plumed hat of Maizie, whose unsavory name was a by-word all thru Middleton and along the Springfield road. Abstractedly he watched the gay plumes bob up and down as she twined her way thru the crowd of more somber head-dresses, and he noted that her face was drawn as she edged into a drug store. "Mother must be sick again," he said half audibly, "Queer how the old lady's stuck to the girl thru ev'rything, and now that no-'count girl watches over her when her spells come on."

So, as he looked around him, he saw how the spirit of Charity motivated the throng, and he, too, felt its urge. The youngster had grown more calm, and looked up into his face with dog-like gratitude.

"Gee, mister," he said in a piping voice, "it's a good thing you saw me. Otherwise how'd ma and the kids get enough to buy us some meat for tomorrow? We're goin' to have meat, tomorrow," he boasted, as he put his hand into his pocket and jingled a few coins.

"Don't you have meat for dinner every day?" asked Jabez, as he took in the details of the thin, worn coat, and the child face that was wrinkled and marked by privation.

"Gee whiz, no," answered the child in astonishment, "we ain't had meat since my old man took sick and got paralyzed. My ma, she washes, but she don't have much work. I sell papers."

And gradually, Jabez by skillful questioning, learned the history of this family who had been wrecked in life's treadmill, and had been cast aside to live as best they could.

"Where do you live?" asked Jabez at last, when all that pitiful tale had been unfolded to him.

"Down yonder, just where Main street curves into the Springfield road. We live in Mis' Parks' basement."

Jabez gasped. "There," he managed to say at last. "That's right next door to my place."

It was the child's turn to be astonished. He looked at Jabez in awe.

"Gee willikens," he ejaculated, "you're the guy what has a great big Christmas dinner every year, ain't you? Me and Billie and Sannie and the baby had an awful good time last year lookin' in, and seein' them others eatin' and dancin' 'round the room. We wished we could have been inside, 'stead of peekin' in the winder."

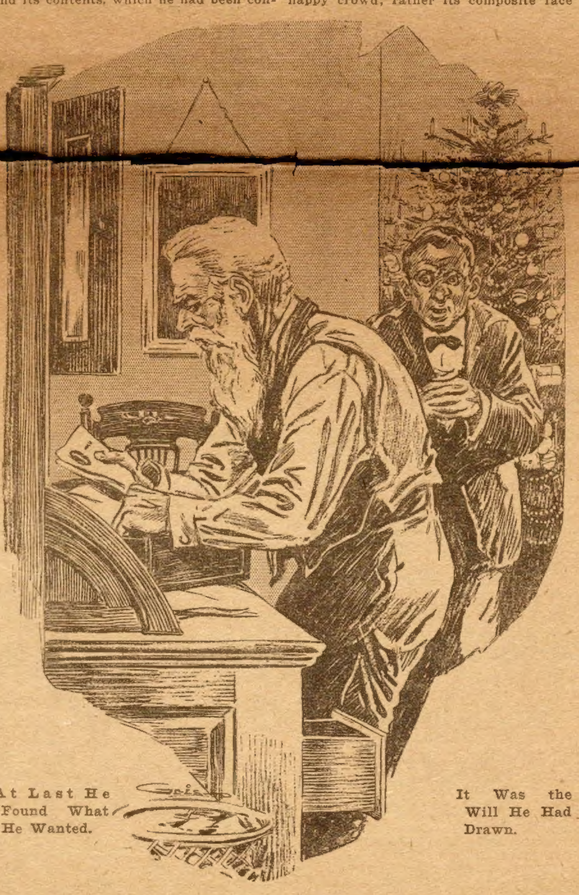
"Peeking in?" Jabez echoed.

"Don't be mad, mister, we ain't meant no harm. We didn't have no Christmas of our own, so—" he paused, and regarded Jabez curiously, as the old man broke into laughter. It was the first time that Jabez had laughed so genuinely since Sally Ann had come to him with the story of Margie's hopes and plans.

"No Christmas dinner of your own," he was saying between chuckles, "well, by gorry, you'll have one this year, an' the biggest Christmas tree I can find anywhere in Middleton, too."

The little fellow scarcely understood. Protesting that he must go to buy meat for the family dinner, he reluctantly found himself being led back to the house where old Tim was waiting for his master. Jabez pushed the boy in ahead of him.

"Hi, Tim," said Jabez jocularly, "get the table set for the three of us. We've



At Last He Found What He Wanted.

It Was the Will He Had Drawn.

got company. And hurry; there's a lot of work to be done this evening."

The boy's eyes widened.

"Gee," he said, as he regarded the dish of cold meat and the steaming bowl of vegetables, "Do you have meat an' everything all the time?"

Jabez did not answer, but seated his young guest at the table.

"Eat," he commanded, and the youngster fell to with avidity.

But when supper was over a shadow overcast his face. Jabez regarded him wonderingly. He watched the mobile face before him and saw mingled there expressions of remorse and sadness.

"Ain't I the pig, tho," said the little fellow. "Here I been eatin' my fill, and pa and ma and the three kids ain't had nothin'. Gee, whiz, wisht I'd saved a little for 'em."

Jabez turned away and called to old Tim who had started kitchenward with the dishes.

"Get the basket ready and take some food over to the folks that live in Mis' Parks' basement," he said. "This young feller'll go with you. An' I'm goin' back to see what I can get in Baker's Emporium."

Three hours later, when Jabez was back in his parlor surrounded by numberless knobby parcels he wondered why he did not recognize the child whom he had saved. He remembered quite distinctly the family that had moved in a little more than a year earlier. There had been a paralyzed, delicate man and his equally delicate wife and children. Of course he and Mrs. Parks never spoke to each other since Silas and he had quarreled over the pine-board fence. He could not remember having seen the family again after they had moved into the basement.

At this juncture old Tim came in bent double under the weight of the Christmas tree he was carrying on his shoulder.

"Ain't it a purty one?" he began, "an' I got the gosh-darndest lot of doo-dads for 'im you ever did see." He set the tree against the wall, and took bundle after bundle out of his pockets.

Jabez beamed on him, and without wasting much time, they set up the tree in its holder and began to ornament it. Then when it glittered and groaned under its weight of tinsel, ornaments and small be-ribboned gifts, they paused in their work to eye it with delight. Never had there been such a Christmas tree in Jabez Stone's parlor. He said as much, and old Tim, with tears in his eyes, agreed with Jabez and helped him bank the many bundles around the base of the tree.

At last, when his task was finished, and the church bells were beginning to chime, Jabez walked to where the picture of his mother hung over the desk. For a moment he hesitated, then very resolutely took down the key he had put there during the late afternoon, and unlocked the drawer that held the japanned box. His hands trembled as he fingered the papers in it. At last he found what he wanted. It was the will he had drawn to thwart the plans of his relatives. This he tore into a thousand pieces.

"There," he said, after he had thrown it into the basket on one side of the desk, "that's over. An' day after tomorrer, Lawyer Angell's goin' to have me for a caller at his office."

Old Tim's eyes lighted. For a moment he regarded Jabez doubtfully, then bracing himself, coughed to draw his employer's attention.

"'Spect's you'll be mad at me," he said sheepishly, "but when I was goin' by Reagan's this evenin' I looked in for a moment, an' said you 'spected them same as us'al."

"Good," said Jabez. There'll be plenty for the Reagan's and all the others that have a mind to come tomorrer." And with that, they crept up to bed, tired and satisfied with what they had done.

But in the basement next door there was little sleep. Four children, all wide-eyed and excited, waited the break of morning, when they might rush across the snow-covered plot of ground that separated the two houses, and see their new-found friend. Even the father lay awake, thinking that perhaps his family had found a benefactor at last.

Jabez was the first one astir that morning. He dressed hastily and went downstairs to view the tree again before the children came, to see if there was even one little detail missing that might make their joy the less. Then when he was satisfied that everything was all right, he slipped out of the door and across the lot. He met Mrs. Parks as he neared the basement door. She stared at him in wonder. Civilly, he lifted his cap.

"Mornin', Mis' Parks," he said, "a Merry Christmas to you." Then he knocked vigorously at the door, while that astonished lady gasped, and stood still to see what he was going to do.

She did not have long to wait, for the basement door flew open, and there, in the doorway, were four eager little faces and four pairs of outstretched arms ready to grasp Jabez and drag him into the house. But he would not be dragged. Instead, when the sad-faced mother came to the door he shook his head, and said something so low that Mrs. Parks, who was listening closely, could not distinguish the words. However, she soon understood, for Jabez called to her. "Help me roll him up to my door," he called out gayly, as the children, with their coats flung over their shoulders, trotted out the wheel chair in which their father was sitting.

And so the party set out for the festivities in his house. Jabez and Mrs. Parks led the procession with the invalid chair, and the four children and the mother trudged behind.

At the door there was an awkward pause. Mrs. Parks halted diffidently and looked at Jabez as tho she half-envied him the pleasure he would find in the day's rejoicing.

"Come on in with us, Mis' Parks," said Jabez, heartily, as tho he were able to read what was in her mind, "must be nigh lonesome at your house, with the two boys gone."

Mrs. Parks assented.

"Yes, 'tis," she said, slowly, "'specially since Silas passed away. It always was much different at my house. And at yours, too," she said after a significant pause.

"You're right," answered Jabez, solemnly, "only afore this I never once got so much pleasure out of my Christmas party. An' I da'say you ain't, neither."

"No, I guess not," she admitted, reluctantly. Then suddenly, "of course, if you want me, Jabez, I'll come, but only for a tiny mite of a time."

Jabez assured her that he did, and so old Tim, who was holding the door open, let them into the parlor, where the Christ-child, smiling down on them from the highest branch of the Christmas tree, welcomed them into the brotherhood of man.

Fourth Installment of a Stirring Serial of Intrigue, Love and Mystery

The Avengers

By Headon Hill

What the Story Is About.

MARION FERMOR, an heiress, determines to release her fiance, Nigel Lukyn, from an insane asylum, believing him sane. For this purpose, thru Detective Quayne, she hires Leslie Armytage, his double, to take Lukyn's place. Armytage falls in love with Marion. While on his way to the asylum he is shot at. Then, when he is at the asylum, he discovers that Lukyn is really insane and means harm to Marion. The Knights of Industry have sworn to kill Nigel Lukyn. They mistake Armytage for him. So does Marion, and when he meets her to tell her about Nigel's insanity, she will not listen, and they make plans for their marriage. Armytage does his best to throw the assassins off his trail. Marion and Armytage marry and start on their honeymoon. He is in danger of having her discover who he really is and tho on the verge of confessing, cannot find the courage to do so. Their first evening at Eyot Cottage is marred by the appearance of the assassins and a mysterious young woman who comes to Armytage under the belief that he is Lukyn. She accuses him of treachery, but discovers her mistake and goes. Marion, angry at first, forgives Leslie.

The story began in No. 48, the Ledger, dated Nov. 30. Back copies may be obtained from this office or from newsdealers and our agents.

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CHAPTER XVI.

THE SISTER OF MERCY.

ALONGSIDE one of the quays in the Southampton docks lay the Idalia, the princely steam yacht which was one of Marion's most cherished possessions. The sluggish haze of vapor that issued from her cream-colored funnels told that steam was up, and that she was ready for sea as soon as her fair owner and her husband should come on board.

According to a wire received by Captain Crawford, the commander, Mr. and Mrs. Armytage were to be expected by a train due at the Docks Station at 6 o'clock, having been delayed on their way thru London from Maidenhead by some important business.

It was now only four, and Aunt Jane, who had traveled from town earlier in the day, was making herself comfortable before the open-grate fire in the white and gold saloon. A well-furnished teatable stood at her elbow, and half a dozen society papers, chronicling in terms of more or less pained surprise the bare fact of her niece's marriage to "a Mr. Armytage," lay on her knee.

From Captain Crawford downward the permanent staff of the yacht, which included all the officers and most of the crew, held the kindly old spinster in warm regard.

It was the captain who, brass-bound cap in hand, now broke in upon her solitude.

"Ah, Captain Crawford, come in and have a cup of tea and help me to pass the time till our young people arrive," said Aunt Jane cheerily, showing by her clutch at the teapot that it was no empty invitation.

But the captain politely declined, having had tea in his own cabin. "I want to consult you about a lady who has come on board and desires to see the owner," he said. "As she speaks of Miss Fermor I presume that she has not heard of the marriage. Sister Ursuline, she gives as her name—connected with some French nunnery. Would you like to see her?"

"Hump! After a subscription, eh?"

"That's about the size of it, I expect, tho she would not state her business to me," said Captain Crawford, smiling. "If she's begging I'm not sorry that she spared me, for she is an insinuating young person. When I told her that there was a member of the family on board she insisted that I should at least apprise you of her call."

"Very well, I'll see the hussy, tho I can't promise to help her," replied Aunt Jane, who often acted as almoner for Marion. "And—one moment, Captain—who was that boy who brought in my tea things? His face seems familiar, tho I don't remember him on the yacht."

"He's signed on under the name of Badger," was Captain Crawford's reply. "Very likely you have seen him in London, for he came down this morning with a special note from Mrs. Armytage instructing the head steward to take him on. He seems a handy little shaver."

Dismissing the seemingly immaterial subject of the new assistant steward, Aunt Jane composed herself to receive the importunate Sister of Mercy. Hampered by her unwieldy garments the woman made but slow progress down the saloon, but when at length she arrived in the old lady's neighborhood she made up for the delay by the volubility of her discourse. In a flood of broken English, she pleaded for "a vare 'ansome donation" for the Carmelite nuns in the Isle of Wight.

"How do you like being a nun?" asked Aunt Jane pointedly, after taking stock of the small portion of human countenance visible in the midst of its cumbrous swathings. The complexion was fresh and healthy, but the eyes struck Aunt Jane as not at all what should be looked for in a religious woman, and distinctly sly. They had been here, there, and everywhere in a swift scrutiny of the luxurious room, but, recalled by the sharp interrogation, they settled on the questioner's face.

"Why you ask that?" she demanded with a curiosity that was clearly genuine.

"Because, my dear sister, you look from the little you show of yourself as if you were not quite of the convent type," was Aunt Jane's somewhat personal reply. "A pretty face enough, I dare say, but just a trifle worldly, eh?"

The visitor hastily crossed herself and staggered back, her beaded crucifix rattling, on to the settee that ran all round the saloon. For an instant she seemed about to faint, but in about ten seconds she stood erect again.

"You t'ink I impostare," she gurgled. "One great t'ief, that what you t'ink. Ah, madame, but you are cruel to one who does not collect money for herself, but order of the Superieure. And I had believe that this ship was of a lady so reech and so generous."

"So she is," replied Aunt Jane, relenting at praise of Marion. "But I don't happen to be her, you see. I can act as her deputy so far as offering you a couple of sovereigns. I am not authorized to dispense larger sums."

The sister raised her hands in protest. "But, madame, I am not humble beggar like that," she cried, laughing contemptuously. "I had thought to go with a cheque for t'ousan' pound—one 'ondred anyhow. The lady is so vare, vare reech, I 'ear."

"Well, she will be on board in a couple of hours. As you are a person of such large ideas you had better wait—on deck," said Aunt Jane with a frigid emphasis.

"But that is not of the most convenient—to wait two hours. I will write and put my case to her if you will kindly give address where this beautiful ship is to stop."

"You can write to Mrs. Armytage at Gibraltar if you like. We are going to the Mediterranean, and shall probably call there for letters, but my niece isn't a fool, any more than she is a niggard, and I expect you'll have to whistle for a while for a three figure check," said Aunt Jane, who, accustomed as she was to the assaults of charity-seekers, had never encountered one of such barefaced impudence.

But Sister Ursuline ignored the rebuff and gathered her unwieldy garments for departure with the air of a purpose achieved. "The reech lady s'all 'ave the letter, and to yourself, madame, a t'ousand thanks."

With which she lumbered down the saloon toward the door, and just inside it was met by Badger, resplendent in the brand new page's livery served out to him from the ship's stores. He respectfully stood aside for the cumbrous figure to pass, and in so doing incidentally lowered his head. The nun having left the saloon, he went on to remove Aunt Jane's tea equipage, but having packed the tray he darted to the settee on which Sister Ursuline had sat down and peered beneath it. His action caught the eye of the old lady, who had returned to the perusal of her society papers.

"What are you doing there, boy?" she inquired.

"Thought I saw a black beetle, ma'am, but I was mistook," was the ready answer, and whisking up the tray Badger left the saloon in time, on his way to the pantry, to witness the nun's figure receding along the quay in the direction of the dock gates.

The boy gazed after her, his brows knitted. "Now what can have been her game, I wonder," he muttered. "I'd bet sixpence she tried to shove something under that settee, but there wasn't anything there. Maybe she spotted me watching her from the doorway, and thought better of it."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE LURKER ON THE QUAY.

IT WAS with a deep sense of humiliation that Leslie Armytage led Marion across the gangway of the Idalia and saw the affectionate regard in which she was held by the crew of the magnificent vessel. A young queen could not have been accorded a greeting more spontaneous and respectfully cordial. When Marion introduced him to Crawford and the officers, and an equally warm welcome was extended to him, Leslie's impulse was there and then to proclaim himself an imposter.

Singularly enough it had been reserved till that moment for him to realize the material benefits he was gaining by his personation of Nigel Lukyn. Everything in his conduct and in his emotions had hitherto been swayed by the passionate love, almost amounting to worship, which he had conceived for the woman at his side—a love now hallowed by the holiest of ties, and he knew as surely as that the sun would rise on the morrow, reciprocated.

Yet to cry shame on himself was to cry shame on Marion, and he choked down the torrent of words that would have plunged her into ridicule even greater than his own obloquy.

"Miss Middleton is waiting for you in the shelter," Captain Crawford announced. "The evening is chilly, and she preferred to remain under cover."

Leslie followed Marion, and behind him came the maid, Crispin, laden with rugs and handbags. The door of the saloon was adroitly opened by Badger, who, as Marion passed, contrived to whisper:

"Mrs. Molyneux been here—dressed like a nun—seen the old lady."

Marion blanched at this early sign of menace from those whom she believed to be seeking her husband's life, but mastering her dismay, she passed on with a nod, as tho at some unimportant communication. She did not wish Leslie to know that she had invoked Quayne's aid to protect him, and being under the delusion that he was Nigel Lukyn she saw no reason in Badger's presence on board to give her secret away. As a matter of fact, Leslie guessed it the moment he set eyes on the boy who had run out from Quayne's office to bring him in, and the course his wife had taken added greatly to his inclination to confess. He glanced apprehensively at Badger, to see if he was going to distinguish him from the "double," but the boy's face was a mask of vacuity.

Aunt Jane welcomed the bride and bridegroom with whimsical reproaches for leaving her in charge of the yacht for so long. She had been subjected to all sorts of annoyances and responsibilities with which she had hoped to have finished forever—now that there was a man to see to things.

"You dear old grumbler," laughed Marion, kissing her. "You have been entertaining a nun, I hear. Did she come to try to proseletise you, or to collect subscriptions?"

"Subscriptions!" snorted Aunt Jane, and she broke into a vehement denunciation of the applicant's avaricious demands, concluding with Sister Ursuline's intention to put her plea in writing and send it to Gibraltar.

"She asked you where the yacht was to call, and you told her, I suppose," said Marion, after a moment's pause. "Ah, well, the importunate lady will have to wait a long time for an answer, for we are not going to Gibraltar at all. I have changed my mind about going south. We might find the Bay of Biscay in an angry mood at this time of year, and I think it would be much jollier, and safer to stick to English waters. We'll just cruise from port to port, making our own sunshine as we go along, and taking—let's see—Exmouth as our first stop. You don't mind, dear, do you?"

Leslie, to whom the question was addressed, raised no objection. In fact, with his growing determination to confess his imposture, the change of plan rather suited him than otherwise. If Marion decided to have done with him she would not have to wait days before she was quit of his presence. She could merely leave him stranded at the place where he could screw his courage to the sticking point.

"That's settled then!" Marion cried with a relief that struck Leslie as greater than the occasion demanded. "It will be time enough to tell Captain Crawford of our change of route presently—after we have sailed. But I must send off a telegram to London—to my man of business—about it."

She sat down at a writing table and began to cover a telegraph form with hastily penciled words, but was interrupted by Crispin, who had followed into the saloon to deposit her load of traveling impedimenta, but had stood in the background unheeded during the parley with Aunt Jane.

"I beg your pardon, ma'am, but will there be time before the yacht starts for me to run back to the Docks Station?" said the maid in a tone of suppressed agitation. "I have your things all right, [illegible] left my own bag in the railway carriage. I don't know how I shall be able to do without it."

[illegible] means," replied Marion without looking up, but covering her half-finished telegram with blotting paper. "We shall not start till my messenger has been to the office with this."

"I might save trouble by taking it myself, as I am going ashore," Crispin suggested in the manner of the good servant who spares no pains to please.

Marion at this half turned in her chair and looked the maid steadily in the face. Crispin bore the scrutiny without wincing or so much as the quiver of an eyelash, tho it did not escape her mistress that her teeth were tightly clinched over her lower lip.

"No," said Marion, turning to the table with a gesture of impatience, "I intend to send one of the yacht's people with the telegram."

Crispin bowed and left the saloon, showing no sign that she was conscious of a rebuff till she was out on deck, when she turned a glance full of baffled malice towards the door she had quitted. Then she crossed the gangway on to the quay and made her way quickly to the Docks Station, where, after procuring her bag from a porter in whose charge she had left it, she entered the first-class waiting room. Only three people were enjoying its comparative seclusion—a lady in a smart tailor gown and a couple of well-groomed gentlemen. They ceased their conversation at the maid's entrance and beckoned her eagerly to their corner.

"It's a good job I prepared an excuse for coming ashore," Crispin began in lowered voice. "I can give you a bit of real news—the yacht's destination."

Berthe Roumier laughed mockingly. "But I got that myself this afternoon, out of the old party with the expensive cap," she said.

It was Crispin's turn to look superior, as she announced that the Idalia was not going to the Mediterranean, but would cruise round the English coast, making Exmouth her first port of call.

"She made the change after Miss Middleton told her about your coming on board as a nun," Crispin added. "And there's another thing. My lady knows more than you think, and I can put my finger on her source of inspiration. There's a new steward's boy—the same keen little ferret who was lift-boy for a week at the Mansions after you came to live there."

The accomplices looked from one to the other, and Scorrier Voules emitted a low whistle. "Then they must have taken on the unknown detective again," he murmured, "and the boy's the shadow—or one of them."

Berthe Roumier's smooth brow was puckered in a frown. "You are right," she said. "The boy is undoubtedly the shadow. He was watching me when—when I was trying to leave a souvenir [illegible] on board today. I half recognized [illegible] but could not place it. [illegible], however. If [illegible] employing him it would be a step in advance."

"I can put up on to that," interjected Crispin eagerly. "She's been writing a telegram which she wouldn't let me bring ashore. It is sure to be to the boy's master, and the boy is sure to be sent with it to the office. If you look sharp there may be time enough yet to stop him and make him show you the form. It's none too well lighted on the quay, where the yacht [illegible]

Berthe Roumier's [illegible] white teeth closed with [illegible]. "The very thing," she exclaimed. [illegible] too many [illegible] mustn't show up [illegible], as this project is of the brusque and possibly brutal order it [illegible] under your [illegible] waylay the boy [illegible] Crispin, the [illegible] Here is [illegible] twenty-pound [illegible] as an [illegible] will [illegible]

she pocketed the note. "I don't hold with people [illegible] so many pretty dresses and things as my mistress, but I shouldn't like to be mixed up in anything—anything serious. I've served you well with information, since you first spoke to me at the Mansions."

"Since I first squared you at Grandison Mansions to keep me posted in your mistress' movements," Berthe Roumier corrected her. "No, Miss Crispin, we pay our tools well, but we don't talk to them. You had better get back to the yacht, and if you see Mr. Frayne engaged in exercising a gentle pressure on the boy you had better look the other way. You will probably reach Exmouth tomorrow, and the postoffice there, with the usual names, will be our means of communication for appointing a rendezvous if we wish to see you."

With which scant enlightenment Crispin had to be content, and so started to make her way back to the yacht.

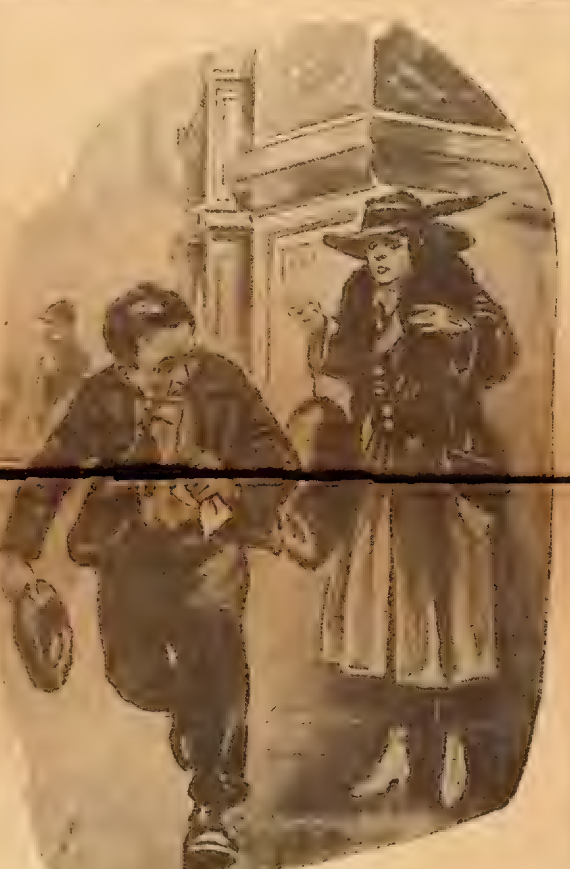
In the meanwhile Marion had long ago finished writing her telegram, but for reasons of her own—reasons due to a dawning suspicion of her maid—she delayed its dispatch till Crispin should have returned on board. So it was that only after the first dinner gong had sounded, when the treacherous serv[illegible] was busy in her mistress' stateroom, did Badger receive the form from Marion's own hands.

It was headed to "Omniscient London," which was Quayne's telegraphic address, and ran as follo[illegible]

"They have been here and learned destination. Have changed plans to throw them off scent [illegible] first for Exmouth."

With the flimsy paper [illegible] clutched Badger sped along the quay, which was well-nigh deserted at that hour, and quickly neared the spot where Fayter Frayne was lying in wait for him in the shadow of a baggage shed. The truculent little American meant to stand no nonsense. He would have a sight of that telegraph form, even if he had to throttle the boy into silence. He had left the cover of the shed, and was advancing to meet his prey, when a strange thing happened.

Badger had just passed the [illegible] the next shed to that where [illegible] been hidi[illegible] when round [illegible]



In a Second He Was Off Like the Wind for the Landing Place.

peared a tall man wearing a long overcoat and a deerstalker cap pulled down over his eyes. In half a dozen swift strides the newcomer overtook the boy, and, walking at his side, made it impossible for Frayne to carry out his purpose. There was no course open to the American but to walk past the pair with as unconcerned an air as he could assume, trying in the darkness, but without success, to get a glimpse of the tall man's face.

Berthe Roumier, or Scorrier Voules, with their readiness of resource, might have been equal to the emergency, and finesse would have been substituted for the now impracticable assault. But Frayne could do nothing but curse his luck, and, in passing, strive to catch a fragment of the conversation between man and boy.

All that he managed to hear was the exclamation in Badger's piping treble "If she said so, sir, of course it's all right."

But if Frayne had heard the prelude to and the sequel of that unconvincing remark he would have been considerably astonished, for he had had a clear view of the brilliantly-lit yacht from his place of concealment, and he knew that no one but the boy had crossed the gangway on to the quay.

"Stop a minute, youngster," the tall man had said on overtaking Badger. "I want to see if there's a mistake in that."

Badger, half wheeling round, and peering up under the close-drawn [illegible] stalker, recognized, or thought he did, the "broken-down toff" whom he had b[illegible] sent by Marion to fetch [illegible] office, and at whose welco[illegible] and on board the Idalia he [illegible] been present. But he had been [illegible] understand that Mr. Armytage [illegible] to be told of Quayne's reinstate[illegible] and, tho he believed the evidence of [illegible] eyes, caution prompted hi[illegible]

"Did the lady send you [illegible]

"Yes," was the reply [illegible] Badger thought he knew. "she said [illegible] to have a look at it."

It was then that Badger, h[illegible] the answer which alone of [illegible] reached Frayne's ears: "If she [illegible] sir, of course it's all right."

And without more ado th[illegible] over the telegraph for[illegible] man carried to the ne[illegible] perused with interest.

"Thanks," he said, h[illegible] "There is no need fo[illegible]tion." And he turned on his heel and walked rapidly back, as tho returning to the yacht.

Seeing that Badger [illegible] now [illegible] the temporary protection of a companion, Frayne, as soon as the striding figure [illegible]d him, started to retrace his [illegible] but Marion's young messenger, [illegible]s to make up for lost time, began [illegible]n at top speed, and so fleet of foot [illegible] he that he was at the dock gates [illegible]ut in the well-lit, crowded thoro[illegible] before the American could overtake [illegible]. And Badger, whose bright intelli[illegible] had soon discovered that he [illegible] being chased, found it child's play [illegible] elude his pursuer amid the throng [illegible] the sidewalk. He had got the telegram handed in, and was back on the yacht, past the danger zone of the deserted quay, before it occurred to Frayne to try and intercept him on his return.

Badger, gallant little sportsman as [illegible] was, had thoroly enjoyed an adventure which bespoke the activity of his adversaries. He had recognized Frayne as one of "Mrs. Molyneux's" frequent visitors at the Mansions, just as he had recognized the bogus nun as "Mrs. Molyneux" herself, and he was proud to be assisting in a case which bade fair to advance him in the profession.

But the good opinion he was forming of his own importance received a rude shock almost in the moment of his going aboard. Finding that dinner had been served in his absence, he went straight to the saloon to assist his nominal chief, the head steward. Marion was in ev[illegible] had come out of her state-room to hand him the telegram. But what, in his own phrase, knocked him silly was that Leslie Arymtage also wore evening dress, with no traces of hasty dressing, tho they had finished the soup and were half way thru the fish. So quick had Badger been over his mission that Leslie could not possibly have changed his things since he appeared to run after him to verify the telegram.

Yet the man to whom Badger had conceded that privilege had certainly not been in the conventional attire of the evening. Quayne's youthful understudy had not omitted to observe that the trousers visible below his long overcoat were of tweed—of the same description as those worn by Leslie when he arrived on the yacht. Indeed the trousers, taken in conjunction with face and voice, had been an important factor in persuading Badger that he was dealing with Mr. Armytage.

"I've been and giv[illegible] the show awa[illegible]" the lad reflected in [illegible] chastened [illegible] as he went and busie[illegible] himself [illegible] sideboard. "But who could the [illegible] have been? I'll take my oath it wasn't one of the three I'm here to shadow."

Badger decided that it would be best to say nothing about his possible blunder, at any rate for the present, but to keep his eyes open for the means to rectify it. The not unnatural impression that he formed was that the man who had accosted him was a hitherto quiescent colleague of the trio of Americans, made up to resemble Mrs. Armytage's husband.

"He don't look too easy in his mind, either," said the Cockney urchin to himself as he advanced on Leslie with an entree dish. "She'd have done better for herself if she'd stayed sitting in the governor's front room, staring out of that window and talking to me about Granny and Sister Sue."

CHAPTER XVIII.

FOOL'S PARADISE

THE Idalia's voyage having degenerated into a coasting trip, as a result of the nun's visit and Aunt Jane's guileless disclosures, departure was postponed till the following morning. It was, therefore, late in the afternoon when the graceful steam-yacht crossed the bar at the mouth of the Exe and anchored in the broad estuary under the lee of the Haldon Hills.

If Crispin was a traitor, Marion argued, she might, tho she had failed to see the telegram to Quayne, have informed the conspirators of the changed destination of the yacht. She had been in the saloon when the change had been

(Continued on Page 17.)

Concluding the Startling Story

DEMONS OF THE SEA

By H. M. Egbert

What Has Happened Before.

LIEUTENANT PAGET, of the U. S Navy, meets Captain Masterman, an old friend, when on leave in Washington. Masterman tells him about his latest discovery in submarine life, which threatens to destroy the world. Masterman, exciting himself over his rival, MacBeard, dies suddenly before he finishes his story Paget finds a letter addressed to him in Masterman's pocket, and immediately hurries to the old man's house in Baltimore. There he sees a form of undersea life which terrorizes him. While he is looking at it, MacBeard, who has followed him, sandbags him, and takes away the letter which contains valuable information about the discovery. Paget takes his submarine to sea, watches a German cruiser fire upon the Boetia, and torpedoes it. He rescues Ida Kennedy. In the lifeboat, he finds himself attacked by the monsters, but manages to win the battle and get back on the submarine. He tells his weird story, and Davies, his underling, has him confined, thinking he is mad. During the night the monsters get on board and kill all except Ida, Paget, Davies and Sam Clouts. They find temporary shelter in the steel conning tower of the submarine. In the morning the sea monsters are gone, and Paget tries to start the submarine. However, it sinks to the bottom of the sea. Then he, Ida, Clouts and Davies don divers' suits and try to find the slope which leads upward to the land. Ida and Paget find themselves alone. They are choking for want of air. Donald removes the headpiece of his suit, preferring to die by drowning; to his surprise he discovers that there is air at the bottom of the ocean. After reviving Ida, they find Davies and Clouts, and come upon MacBeard, who controls the sea monsters They come very close to death, but Clouts' mouth organ prevents the monsters from killing them, and helps them get back to the submarine in safety Clouts leads the queen monster out of the boat, and the submarine rises Ida disappears; Clouts does not return and Donald Paget takes an airplane to England, leaving Davies alone. Donald goes to the British Admiralty with his story. He is believed insane. However, in a very short time the plague of sea-monsters visits England and sets the people mad. Donald does his best to aid in ridding the world of the menace. A sea fleet is assembled to cope with the monsters, but it is unsuccessful. MacBeard offers to rid the world of the monsters and in exchange demands Ida, indemnity and fifty gallons of gasoline. Ida consents to sacrifice herself for the good of the world.

This story began in No. 46, the Ledger, dated Nov. 16. Back copies may be obtained either thru this office or from our newsdealers or agents.

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CHAPTER XVI

THE QUEEN'S CALL.

IT WOULD be difficult to estimate the mingled rage and horror that swept over London that night when the news came of the admiral's treaty.

Donald, in the admiralty office, received the report almost the first. It told in detail of the return of Davies and Ida, and of the F55's voyage to London; of the disastrous scattering of the ships, and of the admiral's guaranty of indemnity to MacBeard and Ida's surrender.

The admiral felt that he had rid the world of a dangerous menace for a bagatelle. But the feeling in the Admiralty was one of humiliation and vindictiveness.

"The scoundrel!" muttered the second sea lord, clinching his fist. "Who knows that he will fulfill his pact?"

"He must," said Donald.

"Why, sir?"

"Because the moderation of his terms shows that MacBeard has no ulterior motive. I think," he added, "that the admiral did perfectly right."

"And Miss Kennedy?" inquired the sea lord.

"Sacrificed herself for her country—as others have done," Donald replied. But the second sea lord did not understand

The news of the expected arrival of the F55 having become public, Donald sent a wireless mesage to a patrol ship, ordering her to intercept the vessel and bid it anchor off the Nore, where he could go aboard without publicity. When he arrived early the same morning the first person who welcomed him from the deck was Davies.

"I caught her up on a destroyer, sir," he said, saluting. "I wanted to tell you the whole story. You are going to remain a little while?"

"As long as may be necessary," Donald answered.

Davies grasped him by the hand warmly. "There is nothing pleases me better, sir," he said.

He led the way below and gave Donald as swiftly as possible an account of the incidents that had happened since his journey from Fair Island by airplane.

"Do you know, sir," he said, "I think we shall checkmate that scoundrel yet."

"It isn't possible," groaned Donald. "We have pledged our faith."

"But it doesn't prevent a woman from changing her mind, sir."

"No," said Donald sadly. "It was like her. But I am afraid there is no more to be done."

"Well, sir," persisted Davies, "we have gone thru so much, and Miss Kennedy has returned so miraculously to us that I believe something will turn up. I believe the whole aspect of conditions will alter. Isn't there any way in which we could beat MacBeard—honorably beat him?"

"I can't see it," said Donald. "Besides," he added, "he has Miss Kennedy now."

"But he has only had a few hours' start of us," persisted the middy. "He will have to collect his swarm and then make for some nearby shore. He must be still at sea. Don't you suppose that we could learn that sound of the tuning forks?"

"I don't know one note from the other," answered Donald sadly. "It was the simplicity of the thing that beat us, Davies, and the lack of time. MacBeard simply had his advantage and pressed it home."

"I can think of one way in which we could justifiably break faith with the blackguard, Donald."

"How?"

"He claimed to be in control of the herds. Suppose that he was lying? That would nullify the whole thing. And he didn't seem to have much control when Clouts played on his mouth organ down under the sea.

"Donald, I have been thinking hard, and I have got an idea. Who controls the herd normally? There can't be anarchy. You don't find that anywhere in nature. Even the fish swim in schools"

"Well?"

"I wonder if there [illegible] not be human beings under the sea who rule those devils. I wonder whether that fish-girl Clouts has got in the [illegible] may not have some power [illegible] them if—if we give her her head. I wonder if we couldn't use her to outwit MacBeard."

"Absurd!" said Donald curtly. "But let me have another look at her."

"Clouts!" called Davies down the engine room tube.

A minute later Clouts appeared, hurriedly pocketing his mouth organ and wiping his lips. "Aye, sir!" he said.

"Captain Paget wants to see your—your friend, Clouts"

Clouts looked at Donald dubiously. "She's pretty savage at times, sir," he said, with a lively memory of the struggle on Fair Island. "I remember how Mrs. Clouts said that when a woman——"

He checked that domestic confidence with a sudden remembrance of the discipline which had been so badly abrogated during the past week or two, and, touching his head, he led the way to the messroom. Cautiously he unlocked the door

"I hope she won't spring at you, sir," he said. "She's mostly over there—where your hammock is slung, sir. She must be pretty weak by now, because I can't get her to take anything, sir."

Donald entered alone and stood looking across the messroom toward the phantom shape at the further end. The messroom was almost dark, and thru the obscurity Donald could see the vague outlines of the woman's form. And once again he was conscious of that strange yearning toward the beauty of spirit which seemed to pierce the cloudy veil of the body.

Perhaps it was the man of a million years before, who now, awakening for an instant in Donald's heart, called for his mate

The queen shrank back against the wall and stared at Donald with her mournful eyes. The face was wavering, half-visible; but the eyes were fixed on his intently, and there was the pathos of a soul struggling for life in them, such as we see in the eyes of suffering beasts.

It seemed like something not a part of her, some other presence that struggled, and grew strong, and knew this man who had come to her, to be her own.

For suddenly the woman seemed to change. There was in her eyes now a look of conquest; no longer the suppliant before Donald, she seemed to assume dominion over him. She crept toward him from her corner.

She came to him and put her arms about him. Her face lay for one instant against his own. And to his amazement, to his horror, Donald seemed to know that Ida was nothing, and that this woman was all.

A soft murmur came from the queen's throat. It rose and fell, and rose again until it seemed to fill the entire submarine with sound. It was the swarming call. It was the call of the queen when she has found her mate and leads forth her army to new land, new conquest, new dominion.

The quality of the tones was such that only an infinitesimal part of the vibrations reached the ear.

From the east shore and from the Baltic, from the Thames Estuary, the channel and the Seine, the monsters came. They knew that swarming call, tho they had only heard it once before, and that cut short.

It swelled out thru all the northern seas, regal and clamorous. It was the call to the life instinct in the sea-monsters, and the most potent. They would have died rather than have disobeyed. Instantly each one became no longer an individual, but a part of the whole.

Sam Clouts burst open the door. Donald was lying upon the floor within, and, standing beside him, was the queen. He heard the call die on her lips.

Shaking with terror, the sailor dragged Donald outside and locked the door. He carried his captain up on deck. In a few moments Donald opened his eyes.

"What happened, Clouts?" he asked.

"You fainted, sir. Excuse me, sir, but you oughtn't never to have gone in there. She's a devil sir, one of them vampires like that we used to hear about when we were children. Mrs. Clouts——"

Donald staggered toward Davies, who was running out of the conning tower.

"You were right, Davies," he said "We've got him. You heard that call?"

"The humming from the messroom, Donald? It sounded like MacBeard's tuning-fork, only fuller, somehow."

"Yes, Davies. That was the real assembly call. And she's the leader of the swarm. Why, man, you've had the secret in your hands all the time and never used it."

"But how was I going to make her sing?" asked the middy indignantly.

"Well, never mind," said Donald, clapping him on the shoulder. He felt that the situation demanded immediate action. His yearning toward the woman had been replaced by loathing. And yet so long as he held her there he knew the fatal fascination that might come on him again.

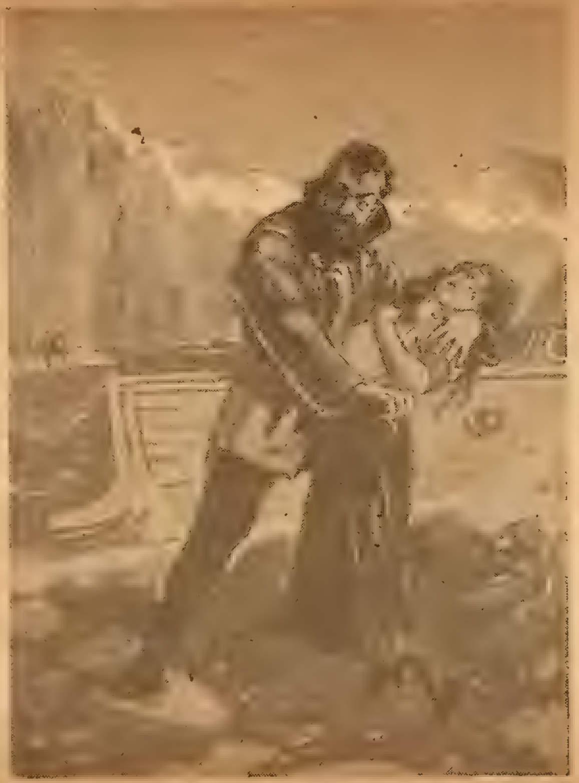
"Listen, Davies. If I'm not mistaken that call will bring the monsters to us. Let's make for the deepest part of the sea first, so that we won't drive on a sand bank when the water evaporates. And then—where was it MacBeard had gone?"

"[illegible] there on my first cruise [illegible] deep, almost land-locked [illegible] in a wild part of the Norwegian coast. The whole herd [illegible] themselves there—and [illegible] entrance. [illegible] MacBeard [illegible]"

"Never mind [illegible]. Don't you see that [illegible] from our faith toward [illegible] making for [illegible] Kennedy, and as [illegible] he has been able to [illegible] is of that [illegible] sound which resembles the call we heard about [illegible] much as—— Well, never mind [illegible] point is, MacBeard is not to [illegible]!"

"I beg your pardon, [illegible]"

"We've got to let him think he's secure until the time comes to play our own hand. Here is my plan—the herd will come—look at that haze forming over toward the east—and we'll go north, carrying the—the queen, I suppose we ought to call her. Very well. The herd will accompany us. . . . Lord, what a smell of hydrogen there'll



Ida Was Struggling in His Arms.

be! We'll be as black as niggers."

Davies looked at Donald strangely. He did not understand his sudden high spirits; he could not yet see, altogether, at what his chief was driving.

"The herd will accompany us, but we'll keep near MacBeard and—why, let him think that it's following him. He mustn't see us till we're within the harbor. Understand? And then—there are still two torpedoes left, aren't there? Well, then, we'll blow his craft to pieces, and——"

"And save Miss Kennedy somehow first," said Davies.

"Yes," muttered Donald. "We'll have to go cautiously. However, the point is, we are following him and he doesn't know it. We can take him unawares. And as long as the queen's in the submarine the herd remains. See?"

"By Jove, I do!" cried Davies. "But—but, sir, even supposing we can keep the herd there till it can be walled in somehow, how are we going to follow MacBeard so closely that he'll not know we're there, and yet we'll be in touch with him?"

"Under water, Davies. We can hear him then." Donald's face fell. "Confound it! I forgot the rudder was jammed," he said.

Sam Clouts stepped forward. "Beg pardon, sir, but the rudder's fixed," he said.

"Fixed? How, Clouts?"

"Well, sir, she wasn't bent at all. There was a lump of rock got caught in her, and naturally she wouldn't work. I pulled it out, sir."

"But when, Clouts?" inquired Davies. "You told me nothing of this."

"Orders are, sir, to report to the officer who gives the order," said Clouts loftily. "You told me to have a look at the rudder, sir, when you sent me to—when you sent me on an errand outside the ship, sir."

"Yes. When I was ass enough to drive that—that queen away instead of making use of her," said Donald bitterly.

"So after I'd done the first part of my errand, I went back to do the second, sir," said Clouts. "And then I saw the young woman trying to come back thru the air-lock, sir. I thought it'd be best not to have her buzzing round the ship, so I drove her into a cave, sir. And when I came back the ship was lifted, sir, and there she was again. So I thought it best to shut her up, sir—and then she tried the strong-arm game on me."

Clouts [illegible] with a pensive, injured expression on his face.

"And the F55 will run under water?" demanded Donald eagerly.

"Well, sir, there has been some electro—electro-plating in the engines, but I think they can be fixed in two or three hours, sir."

"Then get the petrol motors started and let us make our way out of this as fast as we can."

Already the horizon was black with vapor on the three seaward sides. The shore lay about two miles to port. The anchor was hoisted, and soon the F55 was making rapid surface headway in the direction of the Belgian coast.

"Make for the deep-water part of the channel, Davies," said Donald. "And—I imagine MacBeard will come after us to collect his monsters, don't you?"

"Perhaps we can give him chase and rescue Miss Kennedy, sir," suggested the middy, but Donald frowned decisively upon the proposal.

"No, Davies," he said. "We'll play for America and the world, not for ourselves. If the herd remains outside Skjold fjord I would rather lose Miss Kennedy forever. And I am sure that she would rather lose me."

Davies nodded approval, and while Clouts attended to the motor, and Davies steered, Donald examined his charts attentively. Presently he returned to the conning tower.

"Due east," he said. "Then northeast by east. That should bring us to our jumping-off point before the haze is too thick to see. And I wonder whether by any chance we can pick up MacBeard while there is some sort of light. It will be tedious work fishing for him under water, altho he is bound to come into the heart of the herd with his d—— tuning-fork."

"It's blowing up pretty thick, sir," said Davies, looking out thru the port at the dense clouds of murky hydrogen that rolled under the cumulus clouds.

"Davies!" cried Donald.

He snatched his glasses and put them to his eyes. "Look, Davies!" he cried.

In the distance, a tiny point amid the rolling clouds, they saw the motorboat.

Donald went to the engine-room tube.

"Dip her in just one minute, Clouts," he said. "Stand by the electrics. Mr. Davies is going down to the diving station."

"Aye, sir!" came Clouts' answer.

Had MacBeard seen the submarine? She made a hardly more conspicuous object in the water than his own craft. Anyhow, it would not matter. MacBeard, secure in his success, would never suspect the vessel lost to sight in the fog to be the F55, in pursuit of him.

The submarine began to dip. The water covered her bow, her stern. Donald went to the mirror of the periscope, which, fixed because there was no one to start the motor, afforded him a vision of less than a right angle.

But he saw only the thickening clouds, and presently these blotted everything out. The mirror was black as ink. He turned away. A groan escaped his lips. He clinched his hands and prayed that the plan might not miscarry.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE PURSUIT.

WITHIN the conning tower Donald could hear distinctly the chugging of the engines of MacBeard's motorboat. Had he risen to the surface both vessels would have been invisible in the hydrogen gloom: but then he might have lost his quarry. Under water he could hear the sound, greatly increased in volume, and could better determine its direction.

He surmised correctly that MacBeard, having followed the swarm, would attempt to lead it northward by means of his tuning-fork. And the swarm, sensing the presence of the queen, would accompany the F55, while MacBeard believed that he had himself mustered them.

Since his unexpected success the man had lived in a dream. He had remained silent in his boat and during the whole time had not addressed a word to Ida. And she sat like a statue, immovable, fixing her eyes southward, as if the faint hope that Donald would save her still lingered within her heart.

With the tip of her periscope just submerged, Donald steered the F55. Never had he followed so shrewdly upon an enemy's track. Now to port, now to starboard, he followed the sound of the gasoline engines, while Clouts watched them and Davies, in the diving station, sent up an occasional cheery message.

Once, indeed, the chase seemed lost. Donald had driven too rashly, and the sound of the engine ceased. There followed the frantic patter of rain upon the waves as he passed outside the limits of the heart of the fog. Then, very faintly, afar off, he heard the sound of the engine again, and he drove toward it, never thenceforward to lose it.

Night fell and passed. Dawn came up, altho not a vestige of light could have been seen, even afloat. A sooty column, hydrogen surcharged with atmospheric dust, was passing up the Norwegian coast.

At noon Davies, whose duties had not been constant enough to prevent him from enjoying a short slumber, begged to take Donald's place. But Donald refused.

"Let Clouts lie down," he said, "and take the engine for an hour or two. I shall not sleep until the chase is ended, and the matter decided."

Davies saw that his eyes were bloodshot, and he seemed strung to the breaking point. However, he obeyed his chief, and, in the conning tower, Donald drove on.

His actions were accomplished with the automatic precision that comes to one under an intense nervous strain. He knew that there could be no more temporizing.

As he ran the boat his brain hammered out the clear outlines of his plan. He would lead the herd into Skjold fjord, leave Davies in charge, kill MacBeard and rescue Ida. Then he would send her overland southward with Clouts, and remain until a ship could arrive with materials to block the passage.

The high, precipitous cliffs of the fjord would effectively bar in the monsters. For a few days or weeks the world's menace would writhe there like a wounded snake. Then it would pass. Donald had no doubt of his plan.

But he did not dare to dream of Ida; only he set himself resolutely to the pursuit.

So they drove on up the Norwegian coast all day, and when night fell they were still hard on the chase.

Davies called thru the engine-room tube.

"There isn't much power in the batteries, sir," he said. "That salt water cut our running reserve in half, and we've been using it pretty freely. The dynamo coil was injured by the sea water."

"Go on, full speed," said Donald.

"MacBeard must have been running slowly, sir, to save his gasoline. If he puts on a spurt we're done."

"Drive till the electrics fail, then we'll come up and use the petrol motors."

Donald could see by the chart that they were within twenty miles of their destination when the speed of the F55 began to fall. She dropped to nine knots, to eight. The sounds of the gasoline engine were growing fainter. Donald called down the tube.

"Bring her up!" he shouted.

"Aye, aye, sir!" Clouts called back.

And the F55, climbing out of the water like a sea otter, seemed to shake the drops from her, and continued under the moon.

Far in the distance Donald could see the dense column of fog, as it disappeared toward the Norwegian shore. MacBeard had wrapped himself in obscurity to his own undoing. He did not dream of the Nemesis upon his heels.

"Twelve knots, if you can!" called Donald.

The F55 accelerated her pace. But still the column of smoke dwindled, and they caught only the blown edge of it, and above them the moon blinked thru the drifting haze.

"He's spurting for Skjold fjord," said Davies.

"There's no hurry now," answered Donald.

Suddenly Davies' voice came up in agitated tones. "Donald!" he cried. "It looks as if the monsters are following MacBeard after all! Don't you see, they are with him, not us?"

"They wouldn't keep us in the center necessarily," said Donald. "Yesterday we nearly lost them."

"But then—do you suppose they are leading us somewhere?"

"I don't know," Donald answered. "Fourteen, if you can."

They were abreast of the mouth of the fjord. The high and rugged cliffs loomed up on either side of them. Donald turned the wheel and jammed it down hard. The F55 pirouetted upon her shaky bottom toward the solid line of white.

The cliff grew larger, and now a threadlike passage was discerned between them. The smoke had almost vanished. It was visible only against the moon, which was paling before the increasing light of day.

Donald, hazarding rocks, drove the F55 hard between the mighty walls of granite. In front of him he saw an open body of water, ringed with faraway hills. He was in Skjold fjord. But not a vestige of the monsters was to be seen.

Once thru the gateway he lashed the wheel, and went on deck. The quarry had disappeared. A glance assured him of that. The limpid water of the fjord lay motionless before him. Behind him the passage seemed to have closed.

He rushed back into the conning tower.

"Shut down!" he yelled to Davies. "Tell Clouts to let the anchor go. MacBeard has beaten us."

Davies, released from duty, rushed up, to find his chief standing at the entrance to the conning tower, a prey to abject despair.

"It's finished, Davies," he said wearily. "We're beaten. There's a missing factor in—that—d——d equation of yours."

And he toppled over into Davies' arms, insensible from want of sleep. The tension of his nerves was broken.

Davies and Clouts carried him to his cabin and laid him down. They returned to the deck, almost equally despairing.

"The herd has left us, Clouts," said the middy. "I don't know—I can't understand it. Clouts," he continued, with a sudden inspiration, "do you think that you could induce the queen to sound that call again?"

"What, me, sir?" inquired Clouts, starting back. "Why—she's not a woman, sir, she's a devil incarnate! She won't eat, sir." His voice fell to a husky whisper. "And she won't wear the captain's blankets, sir."

"Perhaps she doesn't like them, Clouts. However—what are we to do?"

"I say,—make for home, sir," said Clouts. "I never took no stock in the whole thing, Mr. Davies."

"What are you talking about, Clouts?"

"Why, sir, I never believed in it from the first, and I believe in it still less

(Continued on Page 18.)

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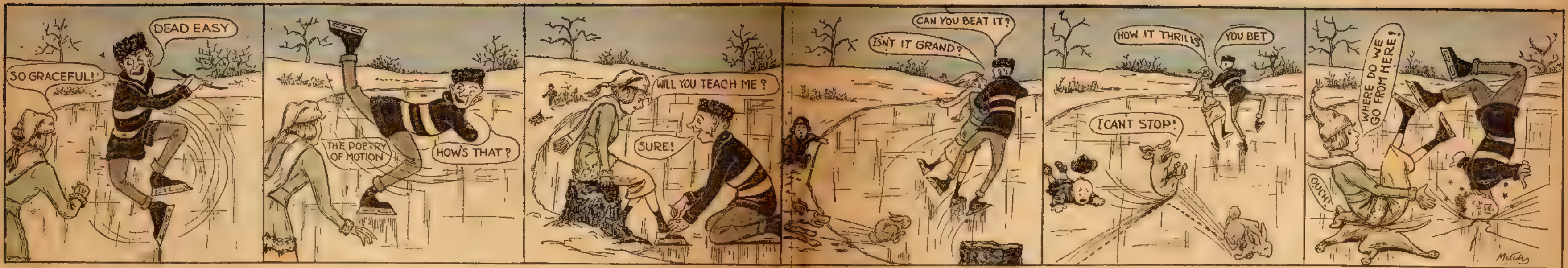
BIG CASH COMMISSION TO AGENTS

LOVESICK LULU - - Lulu Takes a Skating Lesson, but the Pup Has to Butt In Again


DEAD EASY
SO GRACEFUL!
THE POETRY OF MOTION
HOW'S THAT?
WILL YOU TEACH ME?
SURE!
CAN YOU BEAT IT?
ISN'T IT GRAND?
HOW IT THRILLS
YOU BET
I CAN'T STOP!
WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE!
OUCH!
Mitch

When Experts Disagree.

The conversation turned to the subject of damage suits, and this anecdote was recalled by Senator George Sutherland, of Utah

A man in a Western town was hurt in a railroad accident, and after being confined to his home for several weeks he appeared on the street walking with the aid of crutches

"Hello, old fellow," greeted an acquaintance, rushing up to shake his hand. "I am certainly glad to see you around again"

"Thanks," responded the injured one. "I am glad to be around again"

"I see you are hanging fast to your crutches," observed the acquaintance "Can't you do without them?"

"My doctor says I can," answered the injured party, "but my lawyer says I can't."

A Compromise.

A vacationist, just returned, relates [illegible] dickering:

"Hiram, when are you goin' to pay them eight dollars for pasturin' your heifer? I've had her now for about ten weeks."

"Why, Sam, the critter ain't worth more'n ten dollars"

"Well, s'posin' I keep her for what you owe me?"

"Not by a jugful! Tell you what I'll do, tho—keep her two weeks more an' you kin have her"

Natural Course.

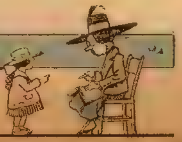
"The receiver of stolen goods took the severe lecture he got in court quite as a matter of course"

"Certainly he did Doesn't a fence naturally expect railings?"

Feminine Advantage.

"You seem to think well of this farmerette idea."

"I do," said Farmer Corntossel, "Farmerettes save a lot o' time by not stoppin' work to swap tobacco and funny stories."



Teacher—"And you have no brothers or sisters?"

Kiddie—"No, ma'am, I'm all the children we've got."

All of a Kind.

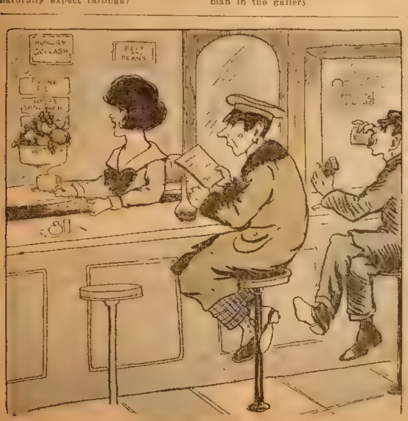
A candidate at a political meeting was heckled by a fat man. The heckling after a while got on the nerves of another member of the audience, who roared at the fat man:

"Shut up, you ass"

At this a third member of the audience shouted: "Oh, you shut up, too! The pair of you are asses"

The candidate on the platform took a sip of water and remarked "There seems to be a lot of asses here tonight, but, gentlemen, for the love of heaven let's hear one at a time."

"Well, you go on, then!" yelled a man in the gallery



Chauffeur (ordering)—"Cup o' coffee, doughnuts and some griddle cake:

Waitress—"Cylinder oil, couple o' nonskids and an order of blowout patches!

Add to Americanisms.

One day an Italian was showing an American traveler Vesuvius in eruption and fully expected him to throw all kinds of emotional thrills. The American, of course, was greatly impressed, but he looked on with perfect calm.

"It has been in eruption some time now," said the native in a voice that was almost reverential. "What do you think of it?"

"Oh, I don't know," was the startling rejoinder of the traveler. "It isn't so much."

"It isn't so much!" responded the astonished native. "Do you really mean to say that?"

"Why, yes," was the smiling reply of the American. "We have a waterfall over in our country that could put that fire out in five minutes"

It Was All Right.

In an Arkansas river town built largely on [illegible] land most of the houses had to be built on pillars four or five feet above ground. One resident, with a longer head than his neighbors, inclosed the space under his house with pickets and in the pen thus made, kept his drove of scrawny hogs.

"Do you think it is healthful to keep your hogs under the house like that?" he was asked.

"Aw, I do' know, stranger, I reckon so," replied the native, and hitched up his overalls

"Never notice any bad effects from it?"

"W'y no," he drawled. "I been a'keep' my hawgs there for fourteen years, an' never lost a hawg."

He Had None.

Tommy had begged hard to come downstairs for a little while after dinner and at last his mother had consented

"But, remember, dear," she said, "you must be a good little boy and not say anything about poor Mr. Roadhog's nose. He was in an automobile accident and it hurt his face."

Tommy waited impatiently till his mother sent for him to go to the livingroom. Then he walked in and instantly fixed curious eyes upon Mr. Roadhog's face.

"Mamma," he said in a very audible whisper, "you said I shouldn't say anything about his nose? He hasn't got one!"

Safer.

"Well, [illegible], don't you guide hunting parties any more?"

"No, sir. I got tired of being mistook for a deer."

"I don't blame you. How do you earn your living now?"

"Guide fishin' parties now. So far nobody ain't mistook me for a fish."

Gained by Losing.

"So you [illegible] and lost out [illegible]"

"[illegible] the [illegible] I came out a winner"

"How was that?"

"[illegible] my presents and accidentally put in some of the other fellow's"

No Worst Sellers for Her.

Publisher—"My dear young lady, do you know that only two novels out of twenty pay for the publishing?"

The Girl—"Oh, very well then, I'll write only two."

Pa Was a Politician.

"Pop, what do they mean by twaddle?"

"That refers to arguments advanced by the other side."

Homeopathic Cure.

"Like cures like," said Col. G. V. S. Quackenbush, who commands the Texas flying camp of Kelly field "Germany wanted war. Well, the Allies will give her war

"Germany is like Mrs. Snodgrass, who went in for spiritualism She had the spiritualistic craze bad for a while. Then, all of a sudden, she dropped it

"'How did you cure her?' a friend asked her husband

"'I started to go to the seances with her,' he said, 'and got loving messages every seance from my first wife.'"

Quite the Contrary.

"Is the musical club they used to have here, defunct?"

"Law, no, sir That old club has been dead these last two years."

Not Always.

"The young fellow who is calling on your daughter has a lot of 'go' in him"

"Not any to notice when he's calling on my daughter."

Casualty.

She—"Have you spoken to father yet?"

He—[illegible] "Good evening' [illegible] when I passed him [illegible] the [illegible] Judge

His Time Coming.

Flatbush—"Is your wife putting up any preserves this season?"

Bensonhurst—"Well, I just guess she is She's put up over 100 jars already."

"You helped her, I suppose?"

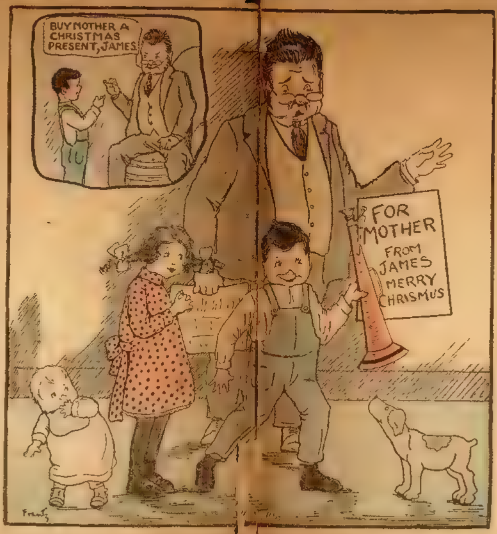
"No; to be honest, I must admit that I did not My time will come when she'll want somebody to get the glass tops off those jars."

Compensation.

"We should always try to get good men into public offices," growled Williams.

"Yes," replied Woodward, "and I think that when a good man undertakes to work for his country, he should be allowed to steal enough to make it worth his while."—Life

WHEN YOU AND I WERE YOUNG


BUY MOTHER A CHRISTMAS PRESENT, JAMES.
FOR MOTHER FROM JAMES MERRY CHRISMUS
Frantz

The Polite Irishman.

She was struggling with English, he, the Irish sergeant, with French. He had just rendered her a slight favor "Mercy, bow coop," it sounded like to him "Sure," he retorted courteously, "an' ye didn't have to say coop to me, mademezell. I knew y'wuz chicken the minute I laid me eyes on ye"

Hard Labor.

[illegible]—"Doing [illegible] work?" [illegible] "should [illegible] just [illegible] my wife [illegible] buy a new gown."—Life.

Von Hutler, Perhaps.

"General," cried the orderly, riding up in great excitement, "our left wing is gone."

"Then it is no longer possible to fly," replied the general thoughtfully. "However, we should not forget that our legs are left."

Thereupon he led the way

Brain Teasers.

Beheadings.

159—1. Behead ground or soil and a conjunction you'll see.

2. Behead a green fruit and to exist there will be.

3. Behead not far and there is an organ with which we hear

4. Behead a small measure and to be in this state we fear

5. Behead a car toll and have a form of to be

6. Behead a word meaning "I" and here's a command for thee

7. Behead what a tenant receives and this relief doth give

8. Behead a bird and here's the house in which Noah did live.

9. Behead not shut and there's an instrument used to write

10. Behead a spirit and here's a feeling caused by a bite.

When these words are correctly guessed the initials will spell the name of an American poet

Anagram.

160—My first is in pie and also in soup.
My second is in street but not in loop.
My third is in run but not in jump.
My fourth is in stream but not in pump
My fifth is in in but not in out
My sixth is in laugh but not in pout
My whole is a country in Asia

Four Word Square.

161—1. Prostrate.
2. To regard with affection
3. Positive assertion.
4. A limited period

Industrious States.

162—Answer by abbreviations of State names

1. What State is in the medical profession?

2. What State gave protection in Bible times?

3 What State is always sick?

4 What State is a personal pronoun?

5 What State is a form of address?

6 What State is a girl's name?

7 What State is a relative?

8 What State exclaims?

ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK'S PUZZLES.

155. Anagram.

Tiger

156. Changed Heads.

1 Band, land, sand, hand, wand

2 Bear, dear, fear, wear, near, hear, pear, rear, year

3 Rake, bake, cake, fake, lake, hake, make, wake

4. Gold, bold, cold, fold, sold, hold, told

157. Four Word Square.

F O O T
O A T H
O T T O
T H O R

158. Hidden Flowers.

1 Pansies 2 Verbena 3 Orchid 4 Peony 5 Aster 6 Arbutus 7 Lilies 8 Calla. 9. Forget-me-not. 10. Pink. 11. Cypress 12. Daisy

It is not desired that readers send in the answers to the puzzles. They are printed simply as brain teasers, and the correct answers will be printed the following week.

The Way of It.

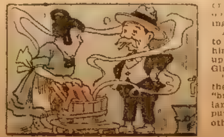
"Jinks tells me he has a very contradictory role in this new play"

"Yes, he is playing a crooked part in a straight drama."

Expert Menu Writer.

"Dickens writes about food in a way that makes your mouth water"

"Yes," said the restaurant man "I've often wished I could get a writer like that to compose a bill of fare for me"



Her Husband—"I hear the druggist [illegible] was arrested for [illegible] pig."

Mrs. Goodsole—"I don't see anything wrong in that. He was probably trying to cure the poor animal."

Perhaps So.

"It's lucky to have a rabbit's foot, isn't it?" asked the superstitious person.

"Well, I suppose the rabbit thinks so" replied the man who doesn't believe in signs

Short Tether.

Wife—"Oh, Doctor, Benjamin seems to be wandering in his mind"

Doctor (who knows Benjamin)—"Don't trouble about that—he can't go far."

How He Managed.

At a great political meeting in the north of England the chief speaker was persistently interrupted by a man midway in the packed audience, who yelled every two or three minutes

"What did Gladstone do in '72'

At length the exasperated crowd like one man roared, "Throw him out!" and out the interrupter went with astonishing celerity

A friend of the ejected who happened to be at the back of the hall followed him out. "You're a nice man to kick up that row!" he said. "What did Gladstone do in '72?"

"Blessed if I know or care!" replied the other, ruefully rubbing his head, "but you see my missis has joined the land girls and I had forgotten I hadn't put the kids to bed. I could see no other way of getting out!"

No Reflection on Her Vanity.

Mrs. Ledd—"I'm going to call on you tomorrow afternoon."

Mrs. Greene—"Very good; but I expect to be out for a short time. If I am not at home, entertain yourself until my return"

"How am I to entertain myself, pray?"

"Oh, you'll find five mirrors in the parlor"

Not Valid.

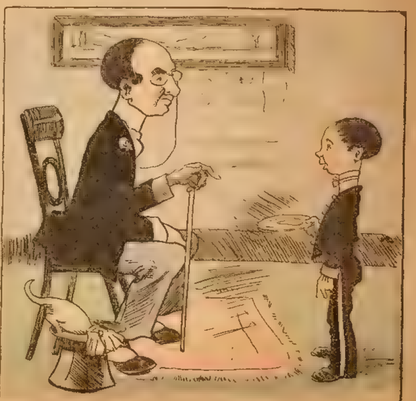
"Hardspur is a disappointed man."

"Why so?"

"He wanted to get into the Army, but made a mistake in his questionnaire."

"How was that?"

"He waived exemption on the ground of domestic infelicity and the exemption board couldn't see it that way."



Page—"She ain't in, sir

Caller—"Come, tell me the truth and I'll give you a dollar Is she in?"

Page—"You should have spoken before, sir She gave me 50 cents to say she was out, and I can't be a traitor."

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GENTLE JABS

Society is human nature on dress parade.

The greatest bet ever made was the alphabet.

A racing automobile isn't in it with fleeting fame.

The way of the world, Elizabeth, is around the sun.

Never judge a man's knowledge by the things he says.

Character is the substance; reputation the shadow.

There is no graduating from the school of experience.

You can't flatter an honest man by telling him he is honest.

It is usually the painstaking man who manages to avoid pain.

The mightiness of the hairpin exceeds that of the pen and sword.

Never judge the cook in the kitchen by the cook book in the library.

Abuse the public all you like; no one ever considers it a personal affront.

It is as hard for a woman to keep money as it is for her to keep a secret.

Boarding houses have driven many a bachelor to desperation and matrimony.

It takes a bachelor with money to exterminate the weeds from a widow's bonnet.

It always makes a widow mad when she hears of a woman who abuses her husband.

Money is a minor consideration with some men and a minus consideration with others.

Beauty may be skin deep, but thick-skinned people are not necessarily the most beautiful.

A girl is always proud of her hat until she meets another girl with one that is more freakish.

When a man admits his wife is an angel it's safe to ask him how long he has been a widower.

The small boy wonders if his mother will ever get over being surprised at the things he does.

If we could just find money as easily as we find fault we would all be millionaires in a short time.

When a young man is really in love he doesn't hesitate to propose just because the girl has money.

After a young man has been employed in a drug store for a couple of weeks people begin to call him "doc."

When a young man climbs into a barber chair to be shaved for the first time he feels like a barefaced fraud.

A Cincinnati woman opened a matrimonial agency and married the first man who applied. The concern is closed now.

In after years when a woman wants to take some of the conceit out of her husband she repeats some of the things he said during their courtship.

THE EDITOR HAS HIS SAY

THIS being the last issue of the Ledger before Christmas it is quite appropriate that the editor should have something to put in the stockings of his readers. It just happens that this announcement comes in at the right time. It is about some of the things that will appear in the Ledger during 1919. In the first place, it has been decided that more and better fiction, if that is possible, shall find its way into the columns of your old favorite story paper. The editor has received answers to a great many of the letters sent out to authors whom it was desired to see represented in the Ledger and all of them have been enthusiastically glad to agree to supply us with some of their stories during 1919. It is planned to start a new serial at least every two weeks, so that those of you who like the longer stories may have your fill and always find several serials running in the Ledger. The other weeks will have more short stories in an effort to please those readers who like the complete stories best. Occasionally a novelette will be featured. In order to devote the space in the Ledger to as much fiction as possible the needlework and kitchen departments will be eliminated. The "Heart Problems" department, conducted by Winifred Grey, will be continued as long as the stream of letters coming in to her by every mail indicate that the readers want it. But hereafter the Ledger will have as few departments as possible and as much good fiction as it is possible to crowd into the magazine. How does that sound to you?

WE BELIEVE that some time ago we told you that Alvah Milton Kerr, who for twenty years was editor of the Ledger, was going to have stories in the Ledger frequently on the theory that a man who had successfully picked fiction for Ledger readers for more than a score of years ought to know what they want better than any one else. Now Mr. Kerr has written a serial into which he has weaved a lot of splendid stuff, written in his own clear style. It is entitled "The Vengeance of the Trees" and it will appear first in the Ledger which will bear the date of January 18, 1919. We knew Mr. Kerr was at work on this story and we had hoped that we would have it in time to start it the very first issue of the new year, but the mails held it up just a few days too long. Hence the honor of being the first serial of the new year goes to "The Island of Regeneration," by Cyrus Townsend Brady, concerning which we told you last week.

AND here is news that will make a lot of you sit up and cheer. Keeneyes, the detective, is coming again and early in the year, too. One of the letters which the editor recently wrote was to J. Breckenridge Ellis, the creator of Keeneyes. It was suggested that if he could find time to entertain Ledger readers with a few new adventures of Keeneyes it would be appreciated. "You must have been thinking of me about the same time I was thinking of you," was Mr. Breckenridge's reply by return mail. "I am within a few pages of having completed a new Keeneyes story which I was going to send you." The editor was made to feel mighty good by that letter and we just know this is going to be the most interesting story of this splendid detective we ever published.

WE HAVE on tap, too, a cracking good Western serial which will make an early appearance. A great mystery story by an author whose reputation is nation-wide but who never has appeared in the Ledger before—a woman who writes with a vividness which keeps you up late at night to finish her stories—also is to appear at no distant date. There are some others which we won't tell you about now lest you grow weary waiting for them to appear in their turn. But rest assured that you will find the Ledger during the coming year one of the best investments you ever made.

IN THE short story line we have arranged for stories by Albert W. Stone, who has made such a hit with his Garfish yarns and who has agreed to give us some others in the near future; Margery Land May, who will have some shorter things and some novelettes and Lillian Stair Schreiner, whose "Adventure in Motherhood" proved one of the most pleasing two-part stories we published this year. And, oh, yes, the author of "When Fate Decides" is coming back soon. We believe that we told you once that he was a member of the W. D. Boyce Company editorial staff and that the day he was drafted he had slipped the story to one of the editor's assistants under an assumed name in order that the editor might not be embarrassed by the fact that the writer was a personal friend. He has been in the Army several months now and just the other day we got a letter in which he said he would soon be discharged and be back with us again. The splendid reception which you gave his first story in the Ledger is enough to prove that he can please you. Watch for other stories by him.

AND now the editor wishes you every one a Merry Christmas, the merriest you ever had, and in this he is joined by every member of the art and editorial staffs.

The Editor.

FROM YOUR HOME TOWN

List, Ye Landlords!

Viola Sublett lives in Ewing, Ill.

Insult to Injury.

Wife Beater Fined; Must Also Return Stolen Pig.—Headline.

They Usually Go Together.

"WANTED—Children and plain sewing."—Escanaba (Mich.) Press.

Oh, You Kiddoo!

Miss Kiddoo of Joy visited last week at the Steen home.—Rock Island (Ill.) Union.

Of Ketchum and Skinnum?

"Mr. Ketchum was a well-known insurance man of this city."—Phoenix (Ariz.) Republican.

Having Him Measured for a Suit?

Mr. and Mrs. Paul Carlson announce the girth of a son Wednesday morning.—Rock Island (Ill.) Union.

Received at Ye Ed's Office.

This A. M., a small circular marked: "Contents, John J. Pershing." We thought he was over six feet tall.

Ought to Make a Hit With the Girls.

Ogle Love writes that he is still on guard duty on the French coast at Gironde, France.—Quincy (Ill.) Herald.

Vital Statistics.

There are one hundred and fifty-eight families in course of construction at the present time.—Janesville (Wis.) Gazette.

The World's Greatest Bore.

The Cherry Oil and Gas Company are drilling south of Superior, about fifteen miles into Kansas.—Lincoln (Neb.) State Journal.

The Inspired Reviewer.

"Miss Kennedy, appearing in striking costume extinguishes herself in character songs and recitations."—Lafayette (Ind.) Courier.

Over Cautious, What?

A grocer at St. Clair, Pa., put up this sign during the recent "flu" epidemic

Only. 2. Peo-
Ple. in. Stor.
AT. One. Time.

Precocity in Minnesota.

Experienced bookkeeper of twelve years who has four or five hours available daily, would like to keep a few sets of books.—Duluth (Minn.) Herald.

Candor From Prince Florizel.

While all good five-cent cigars are now selling at seven cents each, I have plenty of Johnsons Gold Medal cigars for five cents each.—E. F. Johnson, Fulton (Ill.) Journal.

Desperate Conditions.

Clerk of the Courts John Horning's records showed there has been no licenses to wed issued during the past month. This state of affairs is deplorable, for a county like Audubon cannot survive long without resort to marital vows.—Audubon County (Iowa) Journal.

Well, We'll Bite. What IS the Difference?

"Maud Muller" is being enacted not ten miles from Camp Point, and one of the characters is a Quincy man, and we predict the wedding is not far away, either; while others say it is the story of "That Old Sweetheart of Mine." Anyway, the wedding bells are going to ring, so what's the difference?—Quincy (Ill.) Herald.

Trials of Our Brethren.

The editor seemed to be up against it last week, when we had his forms ready to print, as his pressman sent word by his sister that he was sick and could not help us. But we have never been beaten yet in doing that which was right and had to be done. So we began to seek help. The doctor came over and tried it a while, but the trick of the trade was too much for his profession, and about that time in walked Professor Curtis of our school along with Judge E. Bassett. The Prof. had experience in days gone by and had not lost his cunning, so he doffed his coat, vest and collar and placed the papers in position. E. Bassett did the circular work, and the Prof. worked the lever, while ye editor folded the papers, and thus, in right good time, the dilemma had been solved, and the editor had passed another weekly stone in his journalistic journey in life. Pete Smith inked the type forms, real good, too.—Deer Trail (Colo.) Tribune.

The Avengers

(Continued From Page 11)

mooted. There was evidence, from Badger's chase by Frayne, that they had not cleared off altogether after Aunt Jane's disclosure of the program, and Crispin might have communicated with Frayne on the quay. In which case trouble might be anticipated at Exmouth.

Marion, for reasons of her own, kept the little doubt to herself, for if any more intrusive nuns or obvious schemers tried to board the yacht she had shaped her plans, and the latter might not meet with her husband's approval. She was by no means convinced, either, of Crispin's treachery, and if she was mistaken in it she would have disturbed the happiness of the honeymoon to no purpose by inspiring ungrounded alarm. After all, the chances that the mysterious trio would appear at Exmouth were infinitesimal, and in the halcyon calm of present security she endeavored to ignore them.

So during the short winter day the newly-married pair thrust their several anxieties into the background and lived only for the present, content with each other, and therefore with all the world besides. By the time the Idalia reached her anchorage of the pretty Devon town Leslie had quite completed his conquest of Aunt Jane.

"My dear Marion, whatever has happened to that spouse of yours I cannot imagine," the old lady confided to her niece when Leslie had left them alone in the saloon after tea. "I was never more mistaken in a first impression in my life. He must have been shy, or else his liver must have been out of order that day when you brought him to the flat in the summer. I thought him arrogant and bad-tempered, but he has turned out positively delightful. A man who can be as nice to an ugly old woman as he is to me is all too rare."

Marion, without admitting that there had been any fault to find with her husband on his first introduction to Aunt Jane, agreed that he was a "perfect darling" now. But in her heart of hearts she knew that Aunt Jane's verdict was right, and that the man she adored today was a vast improvement on what he was when his own mother consigned him to Doctor Beaman's care. The thought came over her that he might have suffered some temporary mental disturbance which skilled treatment had effectually cured.

The foreboding that he might ever have a relapse she put from her as an inspiration of the Evil One, not to be entertained for an instant. He was a mate to be proud of and to be thankful for, she told himself, and to regard him in any other light would be an outrage to her own common sense. Besides, she loved him, and that was enough for her.

It was quite dark when the Idalia swung to her anchor in the tidal estuary, a quarter of a mile from the twinkling lamps on Exmouth Esplanade. There was to be no communication between the yacht and the shore that night, but as Crispin was waiting on her mistress in the stateroom before dinner she inquired with her customary demure respect whether she would have an opportunity of going into the town in the morning.

"There are one or two small things I want to buy for my own use," she explained.

"Run out of hair-curlers, eh, Crispin?" Marion replied pleasantly, but with an odd ring in her voice. "Oh, yes, I will see that you get a chance tomorrow."

CHAPTER XIX.

BADGER VERSUS CRISPIN.

AFTER breakfast next morning Marion, who had been on the watch, ran Badger to ground as he was dusting the cabin known as "the ladies' boudoir." She had ascertained that Leslie was on the bridge, smoking an early cigar with Captain Crawford, and that Crispin was having her own breakfast with the head steward and the chef. Aunt Jane was toasting her toes before the fire in the main saloon.

She had been careful to fix these dispositions before approaching her youthful ally, because she had a plan in her head, which, if her suspicions were correct, would free her husband and herself once for all from the attentions of the mysterious Americans.

"Well, Billy, do you feel particularly spry today?" she asked.

Badger, thirsting to atone for what he considered his blunder at Southampton, eagerly affirmed that he did.

"Then there will be a chance for you to distinguish yourself presently," Marion continued. "My maid, Crispin, is going ashore, and I want you to shadow her closely. I think it possible that she may meet one of the persons you know of, but still more probable that she will call at the postoffice for letters. If she does, do you think you could get any letter or letters she may receive away from her before she has read them, and bring them to me?"

"I could have a jolly good try," responded Badger hopefully. "But I ought not to go ashore in the same boat with her. I rather reckon that she tumbles to me as the chap that worked the lift at the Mansions. I've caught her looking at me curious and sort of spiteful."

"You're a born detective, Billy Badger," said Marion warmly, emphasizing her genuine admiration for the boy's smartness in order to stimulate his enthusiasm. "I will see that you go ashore separately. The head steward will land in one of the boats for fresh vegetables, and Crispin will go with him. After they have gone, I shall remember that I specially want some forced strawberries, and I'll send you after them in the motor-launch. Then your ingenuity will have to do the rest."

"That won't do," Badger firmly replied. "If she lands first I mightn't catch her in time. Can't I go at once—now, while she's at breakfast?"

Marion saw the force of the suggestion, and at once adopted it. Sending the boy for the second officer, one of whose duties it was to attend to the launch, she ordered him to take Badger ashore in it forthwith.

"And, Mr. Saunders," she added as an afterthought, "the boy is going on a confidential mission for me. He understands what my object is, so if he asks you to do anything—anything in reason, of course, but a little unusual—you will do it, won't you?"

The second officer at once gave the required assurance, and the launch was throbbing towards the shore long before Crispin had finished breakfast. Badger sat thoughtfully in the stern, and not till he was about to spring onto the landing-place did he address Saunders.

"The blooming boat'll start as soon as you push the button, won't it, sir?" he asked. "That's a bit of all right, then. You heard what she said. When I come back I shall probably be in a hurry, and it'll serve her if you start as soon as I'm aboard—no matter who's after me."

"'Twon't be the police, I hope, sonny?" grinned the officer.

"Might be," was the boy's disconcerting reply. "But more likely an angry woman."

With which he made off into the town, and, having discovered the postoffice, proceeded to put into practice the first of the two schemes he had formed for obtaining possession of Crispin's correspondence. It was the simple one of asking whether there were any letters for a person of that name. There were none.

"'Twasn't likely she'd use her own name," reflected Badger as he turned away from the counter, to no great extent disappointed. Boy-like, he had a greater faith in the second string to his bow—for the sufficient reason that it might entail a little sport.

Mindful that he was also charged to report if Crispin communicated personally with the Americans, he hurried back to the landing-place so as to be in time to shadow her into the town. Keeping out of sight of Mr. Saunders in the motor-launch, idly tossing at the steps, he gazed across to the Idalia, and saw that one of her rowboats was just leaving the yacht's side. Inside ten minutes the boat was at the steps and the head steward was gallantly helping the lady's maid ashore.

Badger shadowed the pair thru the mean streets that lie between the river front and the center of the town, and just as he was beginning to fear that he should have a fleet-footed man to deal with instead of a woman, he had the satisfaction of seeing the steward politely raise his cap and, laden with his baskets, go off toward the shops in Fore street. Crispin dawdled about, looking into windows till the steward was out of sight, and then darted into the postoffice.

Badger did not follow her into the building, but stationed himself outside the swing doors in such a position that she would not see him as long as she was within. Every nerve in him was tingling, but he contrived to assume an attitude that attracted no attention from passers-by.

Marion's instructions had been to get the letter or letters, if possible, before they had been read by the recipient, and that was the point that was worrying Badger. He would back himself to get the letter from the maid, but to get it unread was a different matter. He did not like to leave it to chance, yet he could devise no other way. The fear of a miscarriage made him bold. He risked being seen, and peered thru the glass doors. The clerk had just handed Crispin a letter, which she was in the act of tearing open.

Then it was that Badger's resourcefulness came into play. Passing him on the pavement was a shambling, bleareyed old man in rags. Badger knew the type well. The boy fished out twopence and thrust the coppers into the loafer's hand.

"Earn it, old 'un," he whispered. "Go inside and tell the lady at the counter that Mrs. Molyneux—Mrs. Molyneux, no error, mind—wants to see her this very minute."

The bibulous tramp spat upon his treasure-trove and passed into the postoffice. Badger waited round the corner, his heart thumping. Yes, the job had come off. Crispin, with the half-opened letter in her hand, came out

Catarrh Distorts Facial Expression

Also Responsible for Much of the Bronchial, Asthmatic, Wheezy Coughs, Short Breath, Summer Colds; Hot, Feverish Sensation in Eyes, Nose and Throat.

Stop It Now. Send for FREE Treatment

Low Neck and Short Sleeves With Oxford Shoes in Winter Have No Terrors for Those Who Regain Health Through Gauss' Home Treatment for Catarrh.

Catarrh not only makes one feel miserable, it shows this effect in the features, and it usually grows worse. But thanks to a remarkable home treatment, there is recovery in store for every sufferer by the remarkable Gauss self home treatment, a trial of which you can have free in your own home.

An excessive secretion from the nostrils is an unsightly misery. A breath tainted with the odor of catarrh is an offense against all health and decency.

The constant sneezing; the watery, red eyes; the hot and cold flushes; the choking, wheezing, gasping cough; these and a hundred other nuisances steal in upon us little by little until a summer cold has developed into dangerous catarrh.

Nearly everyone realizes they have catarrh, but few realize how badly they have it. No matter how slight the apparent attack, cure it. Even though your nose runs but occasionally, cure it. Don't let it get the best of you. Catarrh lies low, waiting its chance. Kept in check by a vigorous constitution you cough but little; you don't spit as badly as you will later on; you perhaps don't gag in the morning; maybe your breath is not now so rank as to be a public nuisance; it may be that your stomach still withstands the shock. Now is the time to cure it easily.

A stomach filled with droppings from diseased nasal cavities may cause untold misery. The bowels clogged with strings of ropy mucus indicates a body literally reeking with catarrh, causing skin eruptions.

The blood, swarming with catarrhal infection, entails upon the kidneys a labor that may break them down; the lungs and bronchial tubes, scourged with the destructive influence of systemic catarrh, can lead to anemia and the most serious consequences.

You are urged to write to C. E. Gauss of Marshall, Mich., for a free trial of his wonderful new home cure for catarrh. Having cured completely hundreds of his friends, neighbors and others, he now offers to send free to all a trial treatment direct to your home. It is enough of a treatment to convince. It gives positive relief. You realize the relief. You are conscious of it. Your eyes clear up, your red nose bleaches out; you stop gagging, spitting and choking; you look younger and feel it. This home treatment is one of the most important discoveries ever made, for it is a fact that nine people in ten have catarrh, but do not realize **how badly they have it.** You do not realize how quickly it may make you look old, feeble, wrinkled and utterly worn out. Catarrh should be treated when the first symptoms of sneezing, coughing and stuffy feeling in the head make their appearance.

Fill out the coupon today and mail it to C. E. Gauss, 1058 Main St., Marshall, Mich., and a free trial of this celebrated home self treatment will be sent at once, fully prepaid at no cost or obligation to you now or at any time. Do this today.

FREE

This coupon is good for a package of GAUSS' COMBINED CATARRH TREATMENT, sent free by mail. Simply fill in your name and address on dotted lines below, and mail to C. E. GAUSS, 1058 Main St., Marshall, Mich.

Name ....

R. F. D.
or Street..............................

City......................State.......

onto the steps, looking about her eagerly—any where but at the letter which Badger promptly snatched from the well-gloved fingers. In a second he was off like the wind for the landing-place.

The chase which ensued ended almost as soon as it began, without justifying Badger's prediction that he would return to the motor-launch pursued by an angry woman. Crispin's natural cunning came to her assistance, and caused her to stop in six paces after her first involuntary rush. To show anxiety to re-possess herself of the letter would be equivalent to a plea of guilty, if, as she shrewdly guessed, it had been so adroitly purloined at the instance of her mistress. It was not addressed to her in her own name, and her correspondents were not the sort of people to have put anything compromising inside. The wisest plan would be to treat the matter as a rude boy's joke, and, if Marion spoke to her about it, disclaim ownership of the letter.

She would say that it had been handed to her in error by the clerk, and that she had been about to return it when it was snatched from her. But tho there was nothing compromising in the letter which Marion read in the seclusion of her stateroom twenty minutes later, there was that in it which gave her supreme satisfaction.

The contents were simply:

'47, Holland street. As soon as possible, please.'

When Crispin came on board in the head steward's boat, trying not to look crestfallen, Marion said nothing to her about the letter, leaving her in doubt whether Badger had not purloined it on his own account. But Marion dropped a hint to Captain Crawford that on no consideration whatever was her maid to be allowed to land while the yacht remained at Exmouth.

"That is an appointment which I shall keep in person," she assured herself. "The visit of Miss Crispin's substitute will be something of a surprise to Mademoiselle Roumier and her friends.

"Next."

Mrs. Armytage goes on an unusual mission and thereby places not only herself but her husband in danger. Read what follows in the fifth installment of this interesting story appearing in next week's Ledger.

* * *

A Perfect Evening Spoiled.

"ISN'T it glorious here?" she exclaimed when the waiter had [illegible]

"Do you think so?" he replied.

"It's perfectly lovely. Everything is in such beautiful harmony—the fountain, the trees, the swaying lanterns, the music—everything is ideal. It's like fairyland."

"I'm glad you like it."

"I'm simply enchanted. Doesn't it make you feel as if you had stepped out of the everyday world into something strange and new?"

"Not a bit."

"What's the matter? You don't seem to be enjoying yourself."

"My boss is sitting at the third table over there to your left, and I can tell by his look that he's wondering how I can afford to blow myself at a place like this."

* * *

Better Take a Boat.

A LONDON stockbroker bought a "place in the country," where he liked to figure as the squire and the local magnate. In this capacity he dropped into the village school one day, and began to ask the children questions.

"Now, what is an island?" he asked.

There was no answer.

"Come, now. Could I ride on horseback from here to France?"

"No, you couldn't," replied Tom Brown, son of the hostler at the village inn. "My father saw you on horseback yesterday, and he said he was sure you couldn't ride half a mile without breaking your neck."

PISO'S

As long as you can remember Piso's has been the favorite relief for coughs and colds. Since '64, mothers have kept Piso's handy in the home and used it to prevent little coughs and colds from growing big.

Piso's gives prompt relief. Eases hoarseness and throat irritation and soothes throat tickle. At all druggists.

Contains No Opiate— Safe for Young & Old

for coughs and colds

Demons of the Sea

(Continued From Page 13)

now. It's all a dream, sir. There never was no monsters."

"But you've seen them, Clouts. You've been under the sea with them!"

"Ah, I know, sir, that's what we both think," answered Clouts with a wise smile. "But it's just a dream, sir. I expect that German cruiser torpedoed us, instead of us torpedoing her; or maybe she sank us with her guns, and we're going to wake up in a German hospital in Hamburg in a moment. You haven't pinched yourself, sir?"

Davies was shaken. He looked at Clouts, blandly smiling at him, open-mouthed. He almost believed his theory. Clouts, unequal to the strain upon his limited mentality, had adopted a solution which seemed, under the circumstances, feasible.

"I think we'd better pinch each other, sir," said Clouts. "Mrs. Clouts always used to say, when in doubt——"

But, breaking off at this juncture, he pulled his mouth organ from his pocket and blew the most discordant medley of dissonants that ever issued from the apertures of that much-abused instrument.

To their amazement, the water was instantaneously churned into foam all round them. The F55 tossed like a cork upon the waters. A floating mist began to rise from the surface of the fjord.

"Hatches on!" gasped Davies, and they ran to save the F55 from submersion.

Hardly had they succeeded in this and reached the conning tower when Donald appeared at the head of the ladder below. His eyes were clear again; it seemed as if his half-hour of sleep had recreated him.

"What's happened, Davies?" he asked.

"The monsters! They're all about us!" cried the middy.

"Well, of course," said Donald. "You don't suppose I came here on a wild-goose chase, do you?"

"But you said we were beaten, sir, and——"

"Nonsense!" said Donald angrily. "They've been with us all the time. You don't expect that they can keep on condensing hydrogen forever without taking a rest, do you? Muscular fatigue, Davies. Hello!"

He pointed thru the observation port, and, about a mile to port of them, they saw the motorboat [illegible] upon the agitated waves.

"We've got him, Davies," said Donald. "I knew it. I saw it all in my sleep—the solution and—and—it's going to be all right."

They were amazed at his resolution. He uttered his orders in a firm voice; he seemed now absolutely sure of his success. Thru the port they watched the motorboat tossing toward them over the waves. They could make out MacBeard's figure beside the engines. Ida was doubtless within the cabin.

"Up anchor, Clouts," said Donald. "Davies, take the engines again."

Presently the submarine began to move so far as to cut off MacBeard's egress into the open sea. Then, at Donald's command, they drew toward the motorboat.

MacBeard had seen them. He was working frantically at the engine. The inland sea still heaved, but it was beginning to subside as the monsters, forgetful of Clouts' mouth organ, began to draw toward the submarine again.

Then, for the third time, the imprisoned queen gave the swarming call. The sound, soft, yet incredibly voluminous, rolled from the interior of the ship and seemed to fill the universe. It was like a deep, soft note upon some mighty organ. And the response was instantaneous.

For the third time the swarm, maddened by the call, leaped toward its leader. And, as on Fair Island, a tidal bore came on, a wall of water struck the F55 and rendered her helpless in an instant. It dashed her round like a top, it drove her, uncontrolable, before it. In an instant the steering gear was disabled, and the vessel skidded thru the waves toward the cliffs of the fjord, which grew larger with unbelievable swiftness.

It was the last voyage of the F55. The battered old submarine which had rendered such yeoman service, drove hard on the rocks. A needle point pierced her amidships, a score of razor edges rent her flanks. Slowly she sank, still spinning, into the seething waters that whipped the desolate shore.

As soon as they realized that nothing could be done, the three had gathered upon the deck and waited for the disaster. As the F55 struck they leaped into the sea. They escaped the hidden fangs of the rocks almost by a miracle. A few strokes, and Donald found himself upon the shore, which the waves were wildly lashing, and helping Davies to scramble out.

They gasped a moment and recovered their breaths.

"Where's Clouts?" asked Donald anxiously.

Then they saw the sailor's head bobbing among the waves. He was apparently clinging to a point of rock with one hand, while he thrust the other down in the water.

"Clouts! Are you drowning?" Donald called.

A bubbling sound replied. Donald waded into the sea, clinging to the projecting reef to save himself against the pounding waves. As he neared Clouts the latter straightened himself and sighed regretfully.

"What is it, Clouts? Are you badly hurt?" asked Donald.

"No, sir," he gasped. "But I've—I've lost her, sir!"

Donald grasped him and pulled him thru the breakers to dry land ungently. At that moment Clouts had strained his patience severely with his lost mouth organ.

"Look, sir!" said Davies, when the three stood together once more.

Two hundred yards away MacBeard and Ida were standing beside the motorboat. MacBeard's light craft, built upon scientific principles of his own devising, had once again established its worth. The waves—and luck—had driven it ashore uninjured. And MacBeard seemed to be inviting Ida to re-enter it.

The game seemed in MacBeard's hands once more.

"Come!" shouted Donald, starting forward.

But before he had broken into a run Clouts stood barring his way.

"I've found her, sir!" he shouted. "Look, sir!"

Donald was on the point of knocking the sailor down. His mouth organ had become a justification for homicide.

But Clouts was not making reference to his mouth organ just then. A cry from Davies stopped Donald upon the verge of delivering his blow. Donald started and saw close to his side the evanescent, nebulous outlines of the queen of the swarm.

And in that moment the memory of Ida faded from his mind. He stared at her like a man bewitched.

Her face, which had always been the most conspicuous part, was strangely clouded. It was, indeed, as if a veil of vapor had been drawn over it. It seemed to cover her like a long bridal veil, giving her the aspect of a shrouded figure.

But the dim [illegible] influence was over Donald again. Hypnotized, he watched her. Davies and Clouts saw the two figures confronting each other, the man of today and the contemporary of his lineal ancestors long before the dim tertiary times and long before the dinosaur wallowed in the fern swamps.

Davies did not stay to watch that meeting. Neither did Clouts. They started at full speed toward MacBeard, who, already having launched his motorboat upon the waves, was holding out his hand to Ida.

She hesitated and drew back. They were only fifty paces away. And, torn between her pledge and the desire to see Donald for one last moment on earth, the girl stood waiting.

Donald, alone with the queen, looked into her face and was aware of nothing else.

She raised her arms, slowly she threw off the draperies of clinging mist that covered her head. She stretched her arms out toward him. She fell upon her knees.

Her face was visible now, and Donald was aware of a startling change in it. The beauty that had dazzled him was gone. A milky pallor, spreading along the veins and arteries, suffused the flesh. The same change was passing over her that had passed over the dying monster in the house in Baltimore.

With horror Donald realized that she was dying.

She crouched at his feet; she raised her eyes to his once more in that mute yearning. And her face was that of an aged woman.

For a few seconds longer the eyes looked into Donald's. Then, without closing, they seemed to glaze. A film passed over them, and, with a shudder, the queen fell at his feet—dead!

She had given her life in payment for her disobedience to the racial law. It is by such disobedience that the race evolves into something higher than itself.

By such, man rose from his apelike ancestry. By such, some day, wars and all wrongs will cease.

If she was ignorant of her reward, in the destruction of the sterile Behemoth brood, at least her sacrifice was not in vain.

Donald tore the coat from his shoulders and covered the body of the aged woman-thing before him.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MACBEARD FINDS HIS DESTINY.

HE GAZED at it still hypnotized; he was trying to fight his way back into consciousness. For a few moments he did not know where he was, or what was happening.

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Show this to some sufferer.

Then, gradually, he began to be aware of his surroundings. He saw the body at his feet, and the high cliffs about him. And in the distance he saw Clouts and Davies running toward the motorboat.

Ida stood watching Donald. She was still hesitating. MacBeard had found that he could start his engine. She was struggling in his arms. Davies and Clouts were fifty paces away.

"Come!" said MacBeard.

The girl shuddered, and suddenly she leaped into the boat. MacBeard threw himself against the gunwale and pushed it into deep water. He sprang aboard. He was twenty paces from the shore when his pursuers arrived at the water line. Davies whipped out his revolver.

MacBeard crouched behind Ida and raised her body before him for a shield. The girl knew nothing of this maneuver, for she had fainted.

"Surrender, you blackguard," shouted Davies, hoarse with passion.

MacBeard, trembling, cowered behind the girl. With his hand, stretched out behind her, he guided the little craft. The distance was increasing swiftly.

Davies let his revolver hand fall. He knew that at that distance it was impossible to hit MacBeard with any certainty. And he could not run the risk of shooting Ida.

Impetuously he plunged into the water. At first his desperate strokes seemed almost to carry him as fast as the motorboat. But soon this was shown to be delusive. The distance was increasing every instant. Davies clung to a ledge of rock and panted for breath. He shook his free fist at MacBeard, who laughed scornfully.

He had seen the F55 settle beneath the waves, and knew that by no possible chance could Donald catch him.

He turned to Ida, who was just opening her eyes. He took her hand. It lay limp and cold in his own. He saw her shudder, and a diabolical fury overcame him. He struck her across the face with his open hand.

"I'm your master! Do you know it now?" he demanded.

She did not answer him. He looked at the red marks left by his finger on her cheek, and the sight aroused in him a fresh demoniac passion. He raved. He shouted all the secrets of his life to her. He, the thief, the outlaw, had conquered the world!

Why should he fulfill his compact to keep the monsters within the bounds of Skjold fjord?

He had at first intended to. He had abandoned, under the sway of his passion for the girl, his dreams of world conquest. With Ida's love, he had even indulged in the idea of becoming an ordinary man. He had meant to take her to America and lose his identity there is some peaceful existence.

He had recognized that it is this same impulse which fills the world with oxen for men, patient beasts who might, with single-hearted purpose, become lords of their fate. But he had weighed his new hopes with the past, and found them heavier.

Then the girl's coldness, her indifference, had convinced him that winning her love was quite different from inventing scientific apparatus and discovering new laws. During the long, silent voyage to Norway he had realized that he could never win her. He could embrace only a cold form whose heart was another's.

And, with the awakening from his dream, the worst in the man—if one quality was worse than another—had come to the top. He meant to keep Ida and still achieve his purpose.

Donald's maneuver in bringing the herd to Norway by the submarine method had completely deceived MacBeard. He had thought all along that the monsters had followed his motorboat in obedience to his tuning fork. He had not heard the call of the queen because its swift vibrations were audible as sound only for a very limited distance, in spite of their effect upon the men of the F55.

Now he resolved to lead the herd back to the European shores and complete his work of destruction. He had scattered the obsolete navy that was sent out against him. He would go onward with no idea of mercy. He would annihilate humanity. He would make himself sole master of mankind.

And Ida should be his mate, but not his equal, as he had planned. He would vent his rage on her. He would teach her his powers. When he was the only other human being existent, then perhaps she would begin to understand. He shouted all this to her.

Ida, however, missed the keenness of the point he made. She saw only a madman foaming at the mouth, and she took pride in her sacrifice. She looked back toward Donald. She saw him between the two other figures upon the shore, very little and very far away.

MacBeard saw the look and understood. He raised his hand again to strike her, but he refrained. Instead, he reached into the cabin of the motorboat and took his tuning forks from under the seat. And by that act of treachery he wrote the last page of his history.

He slung them about his neck, and taking the rod he sounded the G note to call the swarm together.

The note rang true across the waters. Exhausted by their efforts, the monsters were incapable any longer of condensing the hydrogen, but the impulse to reply remained. From every part of the inland sea they swarmed toward him.

The sea rose into a choppy surge.

The motorboat, riding the waves like a cork, heaved and pitched. Ida saw MacBeard, his eyes alight with triumph, his face blazing with hatred, now above her and now below, as he sat in the pitching stern.

But the death of the queen had been the death call of the swarm: instinctively they were aware of it, and the single purpose that had animated the herd was gone. Anarchy had replaced order. The swarm had become mere blind mechanism, devoid of purpose.

Anarchy possessed them. The swarm came on, a mere discordant multitude.

MacBeard, seated in the stern, felt five sharp pricks upon the hand that dangled toward the water. He drew it back hurriedly. He imagined that some insect had stung him. Then a flipper lashed him across the face. Two more seized him about the body.

An instant later and he was out of the boat, which, released from his weight and from the sea devils, righted itself again. Then he began the struggle for life which he had always feared. The nightmare that had brooded over his dreams had at last come true. The infuriated monsters had turned upon the author of the call!

He clung to the gunwale, calling wildly for aid. He heard Ida's screams. He knew that her impulse was to save him. Perhaps that was as bitter as the physical torment; perhaps some inkling of a higher law did reach his mind before the end.

But if it did it was only a momentary flash of insight.

He felt the cold embrace of the leathery bodies. He heard the snapping jaws. He was torn from his hold, shrieking, and tossed into the air, from beast to beast. His cries were so frenzied that they even reached the ears of those who watched on the shore.

He shrieked and fought, but he had as much chance for life as primitive man caught by a herd of dinosaurs. For a few moments his bobbing body was visible, grotesquely sprawled upon the reddening waves. Then it was rent limb from limb.

It disappeared, and, fighting over their prey, the sea devils played the last act of their own drama. They fell upon each other. It was the tragedy of the hive—the annual massacre of the drones; only they were all drones. Nature had no more use for them, now that their queen was gone.

Never had such a spectacle been seen by man before. The entire face of the inland sea was a tumult of fighting monsters. The dead grew into visibility as they became thicker. The floating patches of white almost obscured the waves. And still the fight became more frenzied.

They tore each other and themselves; they lashed the waves into foam; animal debris floated from end to end of the fjord. As the dead drifted toward the shore the struggle became more furious in the heart of the sea.

Gradually it subsided. The last of the herd was gone. The battle that was to decide the fate of the world had been a civil one and fought out without man's agency.

The lash of the waves drove the light motorboat toward the cliffs. It stranded not five hundred feet from where Donald and his friends, awestruck, had watched the progress of the titanic conflict. They ran toward it and pulled Ida from the thwarts. It had seemed incredible that she could have survived.

For a long time she lay motionless. Drenched with the brackish water, her hair unbound, she seemed to sleep in Donald's arms while he and Davies worked frantically to revive her.

Davies raised his head at last and looked at Donald fixedly. Donald refused to meet his gaze.

They set to work again. For two hours longer they went thru the movements of the resuscitation of the drowned. They stopped at last, exhausted. Davies laid his hand on Donald's shoulder; this time it was he who could not meet his friend's look.

Suddenly they heard Clouts shouting, mad with joy.

"Look, sir! Mr. Davies, look!" he screamed.

They swung around. The girl's eyes had opened and there was recognition in them.

She drew the first faint breath; her weak arms stole round Donald's neck.

And in the universal joy nobody minded Clouts' mouth organ as he blew "Home, Sweet Home."

"Hooray!" he yelled, tossing up his cap at the finale. "Mr. Davies, sir, it's just as I told you, isn't it? We've brought her back to life, and now we're going to wake up ourselves."

"What do you mean, Clouts?" asked Davies.

"Why, sir, don't you see? We've just been picked up and landed from the Beotia. And we've been dreaming all sorts of deliriums about sea monsters and such like. If I might be allowed, sir, I'll put it to Captain Paget. Ain't we just been rescued after torpedoing the cruiser, sir?" he asked. "Ain't the whole thing a dream?"

Donald looked up. "I don't know, Clouts," he said. "I think you may be right. But it's a happy dream."

Davies looked at him in dismay.

"Do you really mean that, Donald?" he asked. "Do you honestly think that we have dreamed all this?"

"It's as plausible as any other explanation," Donald replied. "I can't see why we shouldn't have. It's too preposterous—all that about the sea devils and that harmless crank MacBeard, who used to have newspaper rows with poor old Masterman. As likely as not we'll see him haunting the Inventors' Club when we get back, quite ignorant of the part he has played in our lives. You know dreams do do that—they put inconsequential people into absurdly important positions."

"But hang it, Donald, how does Miss Kennedy happen to be here?"

"Why, wasn't she on board the Beotia?" Donald replied. "At any rate, if it's all true, what have we got to show for it?"

Here he placed his arm across his breast, and at that moment he felt the crinkle of dampened paper in his inner pocket. He pulled out—the two pages of Masterman's letter.

Donald unfolded it. It was quite legible, in spite of the stains of sea water; but now for the first time he realized that he held not one page but two.

It was in the form of a postscript and was the last sheet of the original manuscript, which Masterman, in his characteristic way, had inserted after the first. He had written:

"But thank God, Donald, my boy, man will triumph after all. I thought the monsters were invulnerable, that nothing could oppose them. But the Lord knew what He was doing when He made them.

"There will be only three weeks of suffering for man, Donald—three weeks. For the creatures live for their queen; they can hardly be said to have independent life. They are sterile, like the bees and the queen has a life-span of three weeks alone. When she dies the old swarm destroys itself. If the queen can be captured, all will be well. The queen has three weeks in which to grow to maturity, fulfill the purpose of her existence, and die.

"What a tragedy! Of course time may seem longer to her, but we deem our seventy years all too short. We are saved, Donald."

The letter rambled on, but Donald, without finishing it, handed it to Davies, who read it and gave it back.

"If MacBeard had known that——" he began.

"I think that 'if' is the rock on which he foundered," answered Donald. "He worked out everything mathematically, but he ignored the larger purpose of the Creator."

"Aye, aye, sir!" interpolated Sam Clouts, feeling in his pocket. "If you'll excuse me, sir, that motorboat seems wreck-proof, and I'd like to see whether it's still in good enough order to take us home."

Which proved to be the case.

(The End.)

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Stories for the Ledger Boys and Girls

The Fairies and the Maiden.

ONCE upon a time, when the world was not half as old as it is today, a little maiden lived just beyond the city walls of Rire, the land of laughter.

All the people who dwelt within the walls of Rire were strong and happy, but the little maiden, alone in her poor hut beyond the city gates, was often sad, for she could not run and play like the other children. All day long she sat in the deep cushions of her chair by the window, wishing that some kind fairy would take pity on her and make her well and strong again, so that she might wander thru the city gates and play with the children she heard calling, but whom she could never see.

One cold, rainy evening as she sat watching the falling leaves and wishing that she might follow her friends, the birds, who were starting on their southward journey, there came a scratching at the door and a shrill voice cried, "Let me in! Let me in!"

The little maiden hurried to the door and flung it open and in crept the saddest, wettest little kitten that you ever saw. "Close the door, quick," ordered the kitten, and ran over to the fire. The maiden closed the door as she was bidden, and the little kitten thanked her prettily.

"A wicked dog," she explained, "has been chasing me thru the forest all day, and I was so tired I could run no farther when I saw your candle shining thru the dark."

The little maiden went to the cupboard and took out the bowl of milk and the slice of bread that were to have been her own supper, and gave them to the kitten.

The kitten ate all the food that was put before her and then curled up on the rug before the fire and told the most wonderful tales that ever were heard. In the morning the kitten rose before the little maiden was awake, and swept the hearth, dusted the room, put the kettle to boil, and then made ready to leave. But the little maiden, who was very lonely, begged her to stay with her always.

"I cannot stay with you always," said the kitten sadly, for already she loved the little maiden dearly, "but I will live with you for a year and a day."

And so the kitten came to live with the little maiden and she kept the hearth [illegible] such wonderful stories that she soon forgot the pain that kept her from running and playing like other children.

Christmas Eve the kitten swept the hearth and washed the dishes, and then she said to the little maiden: "Tonight I must go to visit the Bell Fairies. Listen very closely, and perhaps you can hear what we say."

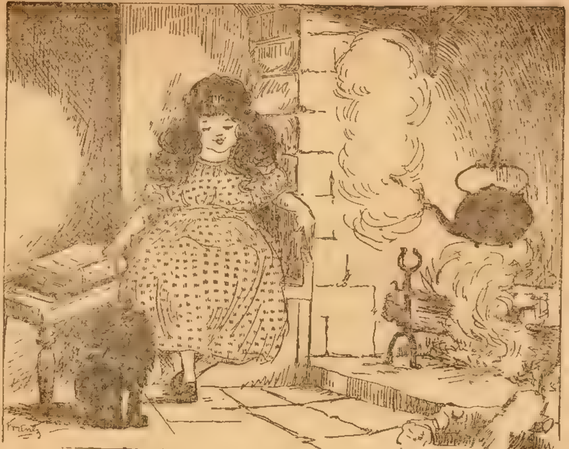
Thruout the night the little maiden lay listening to the clear, sweet voices of the Bell Fairies singing, and she must have understood what they said, for in the morning her eyes were very bright and happy.

When the kitten came home next morning she could hardly wait for the little maiden to open her eyes. "Did you know that my friends, the Bell Fairies, made you a gift last night?" she asked.

"Why should they make a gift to me?" cried the little maiden in astonishment, and when she spoke her voice was as clear and pure as the Bell Fairies' own.

"See," cried the kitten, "you speak like the Bell Fairies and always, for the Bell Fairies say so, people must stop and listen to you whether they would or no."

Again at Eastertide the kitten came to the maiden. "I must go on another visit," she said. "This time I am going to see my friends, the Far-away Fairies," she said. "They have been gone all winter, but last night I heard them in the new leaves."



And So the Kitten Came to Live With the Little Maiden.

When the kitten came back the next day she said: "My friends, the Far-away Fairies, sent you a gift last night. Listen," and she held the little maiden's hand in hers. And suddenly the little maiden began to smile happily, for she could hear the Far-away Fairies calling to her and telling her of the beautiful things they saw on their journeys. You and I would have thought it was only the wind in the treetops, but that is because the Far-away Fairies have never given us permission to hear.

The summer passed and the little maiden was very happy indeed. All day long she played in the garden, growing stronger and prettier every day. Sometimes she would sing in her Bell Fairy voice, and all the birds would stop singing to listen; and sometimes she would lie under the trees and hear the stories of the Far-away Fairies.

[illegible] the year and a day came to an end, and it was time for the kitten to go on her journey. "Little maiden," she said, "you have been very kind, and because you are such a dear little maiden, it has been granted that you see me as I really am."

As she spoke the room grew brighter and brighter, and the form of the kitten wavered and grew dim, and in its place stood a beautiful woman that the maiden knew at once to be a fairy. "I am one of the Dream Fairies," she said. "And I, too, wish to bestow upon you a gift. It is this: No matter what men's lips may say you shall read the thought in their hearts."

She bent and kissed the maiden on the lips, and then with a smile and a wave of her hand, she floated out to the sunlight and flowers.

That evening, as the maiden lay listening to the voices of the Far-away Fairies, she called: "Oh, Far-away Fairies, what is the strangest thing you have seen in all your wanderings?"

The Far-away Fairies whispered among themselves for a moment, and then they answered all in chorus, "The strangest thing of all strange things is the city of Rire. The people are mourning the death of their dearly beloved prince, but because they must have a ruler tomorrow they are going to crown the wicked prime minister king. And herein lies the strangeness, little maiden. For the prince is not dead, but this same wicked prime minister has shut him up in the great tower guarded by the screaming birds. They scream so loud that no one can hear the cries of the prince, and surely if help does not come he must die."

The little maiden pondered the fate of the prince, and the next morning, bright and early, she set out for the city of Rire. Early as it was, great crowds had begun to gather before the palace gates, waiting for the prime minister, who was soon to be king

The little maiden waited with the rest, and at last there was a great pealing of trumpets, the palace gates swung open and out drove the prime minister and all his retinue. The prime minister drove in a chariot of ivory drawn by milk white horses. All the figures on the chariot were fashioned of pure gold, and the hubs of the wheels were two enormous blood red rubies. In fact, Sir Gorgeous (for that was his name) was so splendid that the people's eyes were dazzled and they all bowed down before him.

All but the little maiden; and she, remembering the story of the Far-away Fairies, looked at him closely and saw the evil of his heart. But she said nothing and followed closely after the gilded chariot. Thru the streets of Rire the procession took its way, and everywhere the people cheered and Sir Gorgeous bowed and smiled.

At last they came to the tower guarded by the screaming birds. These were great black vultures, with wrinkled, blood-red faces, and their horrid shrieking drowned even the shouting of the multitude. Sir Gorgeous shuddered as he heard their clamor and saw their black wings darkening the sun, because the evil in his heart made him always fearful.

Then the little maiden spoke. "This is not our king," she cried, and because she spoke in the Bell Fairy's voice every one, whether they would or no, stopped to listen. The very horses stopped with their front feet lifted in the air, and the buglers paused with their bugles half way to their lips. Even the shrieking of [illegible] birds [illegible] they hung their ugly heads as if in shame that they made such evil sounds. Sir Gorgeous lifted his whip to strike his horses and drive thru the crowd, but his arm stayed uplifted in the air as if turned to stone.

"Our king lies yonder in the great tower, guarded by the screaming birds," said the maiden, and all the people ran to the great doors and swung them wide.

The prince came down the long flight of stairs, pale and thin from his long imprisonment, but very handsome for all that. He walked straight to where the little maiden stood on the edge of the crowd.

"When I heard your voice," cried the prince, "I knew that all the good fairies of the world had come to set me free. You must come with me and help me to be a good and a wise ruler."

And so the little maiden and the prince were married, and in all the world, even as old as it has grown today, there never was such a good and wise king, such a beautiful queen or such a happy people.

❧

A Movable Hitchpost.

THERE is a butcher's boy in Seattle, Wash., who travels around on horseback a great deal in a way that attracts considerable attention. He has a dog, and that animal will perch on the horse's back, and ride along the street apparently with as much ease and enjoyment as the boy himself. But when the boy wants to hitch the horse is the time the dog comes in handy. The dog is told to sit down, and the horse is fastened to him, when the two animals are left, to all intents and purposes, in perfect security.

❧

Good Business.

THE druggist at the corner was passing some copper money in change for a broken dime, the big part of which had been spent in chocolate candy, to an 11-year-old lad.

"There's your three pennies change," said the druggist.

"Wotcher givin' us?" said the small boy.

"Your change, three pennies."

"No, y'r not. Them's not pennies. You ain't got no pennies in the house."

"I've got more than a hundred of 'em in this cash register."

"I'll bet you ain't got one, let alone a hundred," said the boy. "I'll bet you five soda waters."

"I'll take you," said the druggist.

"I'll prove it right now. Read what it says on that money. Don't it say 'one cent'? You don't find any pennies in our coins. Our teacher told us."

The druggist acknowledged his error.

"Now," said the boy, "come on with your soda water. Gimme two glasses chocolate to begin with."

❧

Hurtful to His Feelings.

LITTLE TOMMY came home from Sunday school one day in a very thoughtful mood. "Mother," he said, "don't you think I've been a good boy since I've been to Sunday school?"

"Why, yes, certainly!" replied the mother.

"Don't you think you can trust me now, mother?"

"Of course I do! But why do you ask?"

"Oh, nothing," replied the boy, "only I was wondering why you kept the cakes locked up just the same as you did before I went to Sunday school!"

SWAMP-ROOT FOR KIDNEY AILMENTS

There is only one medicine that really stands out pre-eminent as a medicine for curable ailments of the kidneys, liver and bladder.

Dr. Kilmer's Swamp-Root stands the highest for the reason that it has proven to be just the remedy needed in thousands upon thousands of distressing cases. Swamp-Root, a physician's prescription for special diseases, makes friends quickly because its mild and immediate effect is soon realized in most cases. It is a gentle, healing vegetable compound.

Start treatment at once. Sold at all drug stores in bottles of two sizes, medium and large.

However, if you wish first to test this great preparation send ten cents to Dr. Kilmer & Co., Binghamton, N. Y., for a sample bottle. When writing be sure and mention the Chicago Ledger.

FURS

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Biggs pays top-notch prices for furs and guarantees a square deal. Three quarters of a million satisfied shippers. No commissions charged. Send for Price List and Advance Market News.

Highest Prices — Quickest Returns

Furs held separate and returned at once if you are not satisfied with grading and price. Just insert tag saying "Hold Separate" in package when you ship.

FREE "Trappers' Exchange" our Monthly Magazine sent free to all interested. Trappers' Supplies at Factory Cost. Free Catalog.

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RAW FURS Our New Price List tells in plain English just what we are paying and can leave no doubt in the shipper's mind. You will know before you ship just what you will get.

Write for it and be agreeably surprised.

GEO. SINGER FUR CO.

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Reference: Any bank or mercantile agency in the U. S.

SKUNK We pay highest cash prices for all staple furs—Skunk, Mink, Muskrat, Raccoon, Red Fox. Fancy furs a specialty, including Silver and Cross Fox, Fisher, Marten, etc. Est. 1870. Our continued prompt returns and liberal policy are now bringing us shipments from all North America, Alaska to Mexico. Send for free Price List. Address

M. J. JEWETT & SONS, Redwood, N. Y., Dept. 27.

Your Furs Have Extra Value This Season

Be sure you ship where you get *every dollar they will bring!* Correct grading by experts, proper sorting and handling all mean more to you now than ever before. It will pay you to ship where these things are done — and where prices are paid *absolutely on the merits of the furs* — and in *spot cash!* Experienced traders and trappers *know*—follow their lead.

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SKUNK MUSKRAT COON FOX

(5656)

For the Woman Who Sews or Embroiders

Last Minute Christmas Gifts

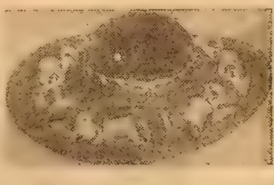
BY ELIZABETH BERNE.

THESE three sweetgrass novelties make an acceptable Christmas gift. The holly ribbon gives the Christmas spirit to the gift, tho at any other season of the year any bright or dainty colored ribbon bows may be substituted, and the gift will be just as welcome.

The various pieces are purchased and may be assembled and decorated in one afternoon, conserving time and energy for other work. The small cornucopia to the left holds a celluloid bodkin, light blue in color. These come in white and pink, as well as in silver or other metal. The small bow finishes this piece. A small embroidery scissors may be placed back of the bodkin or substituted for it.

The round box is very useful and as the cover fits tightly, it can be stood on the top of sewing table or dresser. It is handy for small pieces of jewelry, buttons, thimble or general catchall. If intended for jewelry, line the box with soft silk or satin, of any dainty shade desired. Decorate this also with a holly ribbon bow.

The plate, nine inches in diameter, has an open rim, thru the slats of which the ribbon is run connecting the various spools of thread. This plate holds one dozen spools, they can be of different colors and sizes, some of silk and the remainder of cotton thread. They are so strong that the thread can be used from them without disturbing them until the thread is exhausted. Then



the ribbon may be untied and a fresh spool strung; in this manner one can always have a small supply of thread on hand and have it all together and ready for immediate use To the center of the plate is sewed the pin cushion; this has a sweetgrass base and a dark velvet cushion. Pins and needles find a convenient resting place here.

Sweetgrass basket weaving is a favorite occupation of the Northern Indian squaws and the children. They command a better price than the ordinary woven basket of the same size. Sweetgrass, as the name implies, has a soothing, sweet odor; this is especially strong when there is moisture in the atmosphere or when the article is closed up in a drawer or closet. This scent is particularly pleasing to a nervous person.

❧

Uses for Old White Stockings.

IF THE white or delicately colored parasol is slipped into an old white stocking before it is placed in the rack, it will be kept clean much longer. Cut off the feet of old white stockings, double the legs and stitch along the edges. These make nice, soft washcloths, especially nice for babies.

❧

Tablecloth Saver.

CUT an inch or two off from the length of your tablecloth on one end when you perceive that it is getting thin where it laid over the table edge. The wear will then come in different spots and its life will be prolonged.

Economy in Your Kitchen

Rabbit Prepared in Various Ways

BY MARY FULLER WEST.

RABBIT when prepared properly makes a very toothsome dish, is a good substitute for other meat and lends variety to the housewife's menu. In Europe rabbits have always been used in making delicious meat dishes, and those who know tell us that the flesh of the wild rabbit is more delicate and whiter than that of rabbits raised in hutches. In New Zealand and southern Australia rabbit meat is an article of commerce. [illegible] ing styles.

Rabbit may be served in any number of ways. If you are not an adept at skinning the rabbit, have your butcher remove the skin for you, and then cut the rabbit into pieces of suitable size. Place in a bowl and cover with water to which the juice of a half a lemon has been added. Let the rabbit lie in this water for an hour and half, then drain and wash. It is then ready for cooking in any of the following ways:

SOUR SPICED RABBIT—Cut and prepare rabbit as directed. Wipe dry and then place in a deep casserole and add: 1 cupful of chopped onions, 2 green or red peppers chopped fine, 1 bay leaf, 1 tablespoonful of pickling spices, sufficient vinegar and water to barely cover, using two parts vinegar to one part water. Turn the meat each day for three days, then add: One cup of boiling water. Cover securely and then cook until meat is tender. Serve either hot or cold.

RABBIT CHILI—Cut and prepare the rabbit and then cook until tender. Remove the rabbit and take the meat from the bones carefully. Now boil the liquid to reduce it to one-half its former quantity. Add the meat and 1 cupful of cooked kidney beans, 2 teaspoonfuls of salt, 1 teaspoonful of paprika, 1 teaspoonful of chili powder, 1 onion, grated. When hot lift on toasted squares of corn bread and serve.

BELGIAN RABBIT STEW—Place the rabbit in earthen jar and add: 4 onions, 2 carrots, 1½ cupfuls of boiling water. Cover closely and steam until tender. Now lift the rabbit from the dish, thicken slightly with cornstarch and then add: ½ cupful of sour cream, 2 tablespoonfuls of finely minced parsley, ¼ tablespoonful of thyme. Keep warm while preparing the potato dumplings: 1½ cupfuls of mashed potatoes, 1 teaspoonful of salt, ⅛ teaspoonful of paprika, 1 tablespoonful of grated onion, 1 tablespoonful of minced parsley, 1 cupful of flour, 1 egg, ½ cupful of baking powder. Mix and work to a stiff dough and then form into balls the size of an egg. When all are made cook fifteen minutes in boiling water and then lift with a skimmer. Drain on cloth. Now lift the rabbit on a warm dish and set the potato balls around the dish. Strain on the gravy and serve.

Braised Oxtail Autillo.

HAVE the butcher cut the tails in two-inch pieces and wash and cover with cold water. Bring to a boil and then turn into a colander and let cold water run on the tails. Now melt 3 tablespoonfuls of shortening in a deep saucepan and roll the pieces of oxtail in barley flour and then brown quickly in the hot fat. When the pieces are nicely browned add: 2 cupfuls of boiling water, 3 onions cut in quarters, 1 green pepper chopped fine, 1 branch of thyme. Cook slowly until the meat is tender and then thicken the gravy, season slightly. Shred a small head of cabbage very fine, wash well in cold water and then drain. Cook until tender in boiling water. Drain well. Now place in a saucepan with two tablespoonfuls of butter and cook gently until the moisture is evaporated. Season and make a border around a hot platter with the cabbage. Place the prepared oxtails in the center and sprinkle with one tablespoonful of finely grated cheese and minced parsley.

Ravagotta Butter.

ONE-HALF green pepper, 4 branches of parsley, ¼ onion, tiny point of garlic. Mince very fine, rubbing thru a fine sieve. Place in a soup plate and add: ½ teaspoonful of salt, ½ teaspoonful of paprika, ½ teaspoonful of mustard, 1½ tablespoonfuls butter. Work to a smooth paste and then spread on the steak.

❧

Stuffed Cabbage.

REMOVE coarse outer leaves and core. Parboil for three minutes. Fill core and inside of each leaf with finely-chopped left-over meat (raw meat is best), or sausage. Tie securely in cheese cloth. Place in kettle with 2 or 3 carrots and onions. Cover with stock, and let simmer two hours or until tender.

❧

Cranberries.

TRY preparing the cranberries by using the following recipe: ½ cupful of sugar, 4 tablespoonfuls of water. Bring to a boil and cook five minutes. Then add: ¼ teaspoonful of salt, 1 pint of cranberries. Cook slowly for fifteen minutes or until the berries are soft. Pour at once into a china or earthenware bowl

❧

Potato Soup.

WASH four medium-sized potatoes and then grate into one pint of water. Place on a fire and bring to a boil. Cook slowly for fifteen minutes and then add 1 cupful of milk, 1 tablespoonful of grated onion, 1 tablespoonful of finely-minced parsley, 1 teaspoonful of pepper. Bring quickly to a boil and serve with croutons

■

Household Hints.

DRIPPING which comes from the meat may be clarified by being put into a basin; pour over sufficient boiling water to cover it. Stir thoroly and leave to cool, when the clear white drippings will form a solid lump on the top.

Shoes that have become stiff and uncomfortable by being worn in the rain, or that have been lying unused for some time, can be made soft and pliable by vaseline well rubbed in with a cloth and rubbed off with a dry one.

To clean candlesticks, whether enamel or tin, without injuring the enamel or metal, fill the candlestick with boiling water and thoroly dry with a cloth. By this method both the color and substance of the candlesticks will be preserved.

When washing silk or cotton gloves, iron them when nearly dry. It greatly improves their appearance.

LADIES, PRESERVE YOUR YOUTHFUL APPEARANCE.

Madame Mignette's Beauty Cream and Skin Food removes every defect, spot, freckle, pimple, blemish or wrinkle, leaving the skin soft, clear and smooth. It is perfectly harmless and will not injure the most delicate skin. It preserves and brings back the youthful glow to the face and ruddiness to the cheeks, preserving it in this condition until extreme old age. This preparation has been used for years, and hundreds are now using it and are more than delighted with the results. Send us ten (10) cents for formula which you can have filled at any drug store at a very small cost. Do not delay, but write at once. Box 441, Blairsville, Pa.

COLDS INTERFERE WITH BUSINESS

Dr. King's New Discovery relieves them and keep you going on the job

Fifty continuous years of almost unfailing checking and relieving coughs, colds and kindred sufferings is the proud achievement of Dr. King's New Discovery.

Grandparents, fathers, mothers, the kiddies—all have used and are using it as the [illegible], surest, most pleasant-to-take remedy they know of.

Druggists everywhere. 60c and $1.20.

Keep Bowels On Schedule

Late, retarded functioning throws the whole day's duties out of gear. Keep the system cleansed, the appetite lively, the stomach staunch with Dr. King's New Life Pills. Mild and tonic in action. Sold everywhere. 25c.

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Made to fit you.
Act as our Agent.

YOUR CLOTHES FREE AND BIG PROFITS

Send name and address for this great new offer, selection of fine samples and latest styles to choose from. All other tailoring agents write too. Send now, today, to

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Elegant 21 Jewel Gold Filled Watch

Popular 16 size for men or 12 size for boys. Open face or hunting style case, very fine gold filled plain polish or handsomely engraved. Fitted with an elegant movement, stamped and guaranteed.

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Our special price for a short time only, $7.95. Fully worth double. Send us your name and address and watch will be sent by parcel post. When you receive it pay Postman $7.95 and watch is yours. If not satisfied after ten day's trial, we will gladly refund your money. ORDER NOW.

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Talking Machines at Cut Prices

New, $15.00 Carola Talking Machine, our Cut Price $7.50. 10 Records Free, with each Carola. 4 Minute Records, U. S., Columbia and Edison Phonographs 25c each. Bargains in used Talking Machines. Send for catalogue. DENINGER PRICE CUTTER, ROCHESTER, N. Y.

Who Do I Give This Car To?

YOU?

On February 22, 1919

I am Going to Give Away

Two Automobiles

I have been giving away automobiles for a long time. Now I'm going to give away two more. Send me the coupon down in the corner and I'll tell you about it. One of the cars I am going to give away is an Overland. It is the latest model, fully equipped and complete in every detail. It will be delivered right at some one's front door without a cent of cost to them. Don't you want to get it? Send me the coupon and I'll tell you how. The other car is a Ford, and will also be given to some one. As soon as I receive the coupon I'll send you full details of my offer. Besides the two cars I'm going to give away the other rewards listed here at the left. Surely there is something in that list you want.

Cut out and Send the Coupon DO IT NOW!

$1800 in Rewards

Delivered through your local dealer.

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$30 Elgin Gold Watch
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Rewards duplicated in case of ties

Maybe you think I am a fraud, or that you know all about my plan. It won't hurt you to send the coupon and find out, and you can't know *all* about my plan unless I tell you. I can't tell you unless you send the coupon.

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THE REWARD MAN 150
P. O. Box 1632 Philadelphia, Pa.

Please send me full information about the automobiles you are giving away. The signing of this coupon does not obligate me in any way.

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P. O. ____________________

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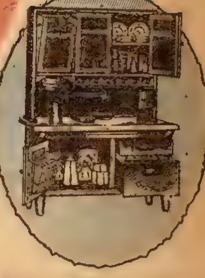
As Low As 75¢ A Month

Just see how easy it is to furnish your home complete or to have elegant single pieces that you may need, all on Hartman's Easy Credit Plan. Here are just a few bargains selected from our enormous stocks of quality merchandise at lowest bed rock prices, and sold on small monthly payments—some as low as only 75c a month. Our wonderful Bargain Catalog shows hundreds of items—many to be had for as little as only 50c a month. Use the goods while paying for them in amounts so small you scarcely feel the cost. This explains why hundreds of thousands of Hartman customers, today, have such wonderfully furnished homes—they buy on this easy credit plan from Hartman.

30 Days Free Trial

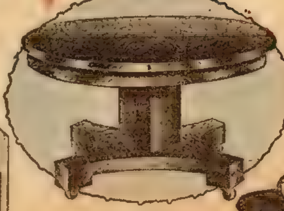
The few sample bargains shown here merely give you an idea of the practically unlimited selections we offer, at bargain prices and on easy terms.

Send at once for our great Bargain Catalog, giving full descriptions, accurate illustrations, (many in colors) and prices and terms of these sensational bargains. No matter what you order, you have 30 days' free use of goods before you decide to buy. If not satisfactory, return what you purchase and we will pay delivery charges both ways.



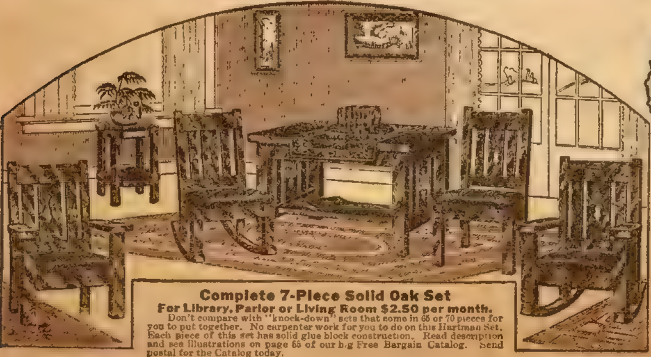
Solid Oak Kitchen Cabinet

$2.00 per month. See Catalog, page 187 for price and detailed description. Greatest kitchen convenience ever designed. Send postal today for Big Bargain Catalog.



Dining Room Extension Table

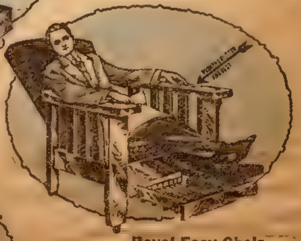
$1.50 per month. A typical Hartman Bargain. For description and price see Catalog page 165. Send for your free copy.



Complete 7-Piece Solid Oak Set

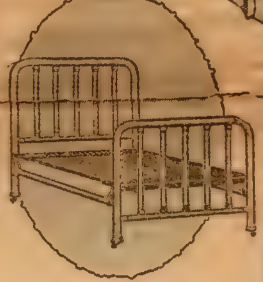
For Library, Parlor or Living Room $2.50 per month.

Don't compare with "knock-down" sets that come in 65 or 70 pieces for you to put together. No carpenter work for you to do on this Hartman Set. Each piece of this set has solid glue block construction. Read description and see illustrations on page 65 of our big Free Bargain Catalog. Send postal for the Catalog today.



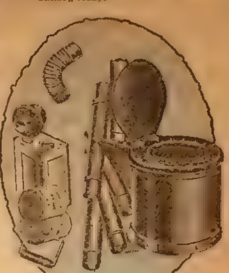
Royal Easy Chair

Most Comfortable Easy Chair in the World only [illegible] per month. Read about this wonderful chair on page 43 of our Bargain Catalog. You'll be sure to order one. Send for Catalog today.



2-Inch Steel Post Bed

$1.50 per month. See page 142 of our Mammoth Bargain Catalog for full description and price of this wonderful bed bargain. 84 other pages of Bed Room Furniture. Send postal today for the Catalog.



Sanitary Indoor Toilet

$2.00 per month. An absolute necessity in every home where there is no running water. Be sure to read complete description and our low price on pages 296-297 of Big Bargain Catalog, which we send free.

Just Send a Post Card

Million Catalogs FREE

Send only a postal for your copy of this Mammoth Bargain Catalog. In it you will find described everything for the home.

20 pages of Rockers, Easy and Reading Chairs (luxuriously upholstered and plain) from 50c to $2.25 a month.

6 pages of Library Sets (upholstered and plain) from $2.00 to $3.25 per month.

2 pages Fiber Reed Furniture—Rockers as low as 75c per month.

7 pages of richly carved and upholstered parlor suites from $2.75 to $11.00 per month.

5 pages of Book Cases and Writing Desks from $1.00 to $1.75 per month.

7 pages Library Tables—wonderful designs in Oak and Mahogany finish—from $1.00 to $2.75 per month.

11 pages of superb upholstered Couches and Bed Davenports at from $2.25 to $5.75 per month.

35 pages of Bed Room Furniture. Complete sets from $3.50 per month up. Dressers from $1.50 to $3.25 per month. Wardrobes and Chiffoniers from $1.00 to $2.75 per month. Mattresses from $1.00 to $2.75 per month. Woven and Special Springs from 50c to $1.50 per month.

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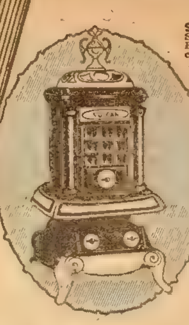
30 pages of Stoves and Ranges from 75c to $5.50 per month.

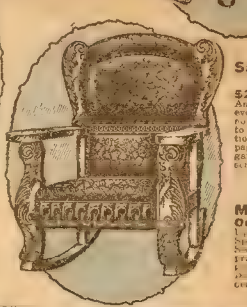
And page after page of Baby Carriages, Go-Carts, Linoleums, Oil Cloths, Portieres, Carpet Sweepers, Porch Furniture, Kitchen Utensils, Phonographs, Lamps, Bags, Suit Cases, Trunks, Washing Machines, Wringers, Mixed Paints, Prepared Roofing, Cream Separators, Gasoline Engines, Feed Grinders, Incubators, Brooders and other farm necessities—all on easy terms, ranging from 50c per month to a few dollars a month. Many pages in beautiful colors showing just how the goods look.

This we believe is the most wonderful catalog ever issued and the greatest array of bargains. Be sure to get it. It is free. Your copy is ready now. Send only a post card.



Soft Coal or Wood Heater

$1.50 per month. Splendid Heater and Bargain—See Catalog page 241 for price and description. Write for the big free Bargain Catalog today.



Solid Oak Massive Rocker

Only 75c per month. Upholstered in Imitation Spanish Brown Leather. See full description and price on page [illegible] of our Bargain Catalog which shows [illegible] wonderful Rocker Bargains.

Send a Postal Today

for your free copy of this Mammoth Catalog of Hartman Bargains! Let it be your shopping guide for everything needed for the home. With this Bargain Catalog in your hand, you can buy intelligently and economically with every element of risk removed. The great House of Hartman today serves millions of satisfied customers all over the United States. Our $12,000,000 capital stands behind our positive guarantee of satisfaction on every purchase you make here. If what you order does not come up to your highest expectations, return the goods after 30 days' free trial, and we will pay delivery charges both ways. Absolutely no chance for you to lose. Be sure to send a postal request for this big catalog today and see what a wonderful assortment of bargains we have to offer you all on easy monthly terms. This request places you under no obligation whatever. Send now—today.

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Dept. 1568
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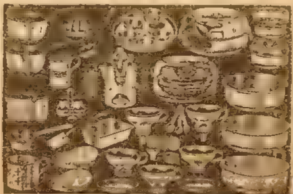
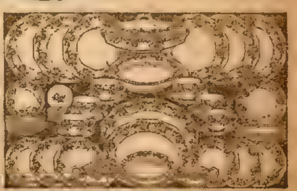


42-Piece Aluminum Set

$1.25 per month. Remarkable value. You'll find it described and priced in Catalog, page 254. Send postal request for Big Free Bargain Catalog today.



51-Piece Dinner Set

Only $1.00 per month. Martha Washington Shape—White and Gold Decorations—Rose Border. Fully described on page 208 of Bargain Catalog. Send postal for this Big Free Bargain Catalog today.

Your Problems of the Heart Solved Here

Conducted by Winifred Grey

TO MY CORRESPONDENTS:

So many letters come to this department that it is impossible to answer each and every one of them. However, many of them are similar, and it is hoped that you may find the answer to your particular problem in the reply to one who has written as you have.

Doubtful.

DEAR MISS GREY:

I have been going with a young man for a year. He is very kind to me, but does not come to see me oftener than once a week. He used to go with another girl before he went with me. Do you think he cares for me? DOLLY I.

Don't assume too much because the young man calls on you. Wait until he makes a declaration of his love.

Father Objects.

DEAR MISS GREY.

I am a boy of 18 and am going with a girl of 16. Her father does not like this. Do you think I ought to go with her against her father's will? W. E. L.

No, you are too young to think of love, anyway

First Cousin.

DEAR MISS GREY:

I am a boy of 18 in love with a first cousin of my age. She used to think a lot of me, but here recently likes to go about with soldiers. Please tell me if it is all right for first cousins to go together. How shall I win her love. G. H.

Don't try. It is never a good thing for first cousins to marry. Try to find some other girl.

Letter Unanswered.

DEAR MISS GREY:

I am in love with a young man two years my senior. He promised to marry me. Two weeks ago I wrote him a letter about this, and I have received no answer. What can be the trouble? G. T. R.

Perhaps the young man did not get your letter. Write again, and then if you do not hear from him send a tracer after the letter to see if it reached its destination.

Proposal.

DEAR MISS GREY:

I am in love with a girl of 19, tho she does not take much notice of me. I hear from her by letter every week. Recently I wrote her and asked her to become [illegible]. In her letter she said the best thing we can do is [illegible]. What did she mean?

She very evidently does not care for you, and if I were you I should do as she asks. There are plenty of other girls.

In Doubt.

DEAR MISS GREY:

I am a young girl and have been engaged to a man for over a year. He seldom goes out with me, and doesn't seem to want others to know that he cares for me. I have been told by friends that he is false to me and goes out with others. My parents do not object to him. Should I be true to him or believe what my friends tell me? BLUE EYES.

Don't make a secret of your engagement. Find out for yourself whether this gossip about him is true. If it is, drop him.

Bashful Boy.

DEAR MISS GREY:

We are three girls in our teens and live on a street where there are quite a few young people. On Sundays and Saturday nights we usually get together at one house and play games or dance. There is one boy who does not come to our parties even if we invite him. His mother wants him to go with us. He is friendly enough when he is with us but his mother says he is afraid some one will tease him about the girls. Can you tell us what we can do to get him out? TROUBLED.

The boy is bashful. Be kind to him, but do not urge him to go about. In a short time he will do so of his own accord.

Troubled Sister-in-law.

DEAR MISS GREY:

I am married and live happily with my husband. He has no bad habits but he has a cousin and brother who come to my house when they have been drinking. They do it to tantalize my husband. This cousin was engaged to a girl friend of mine, but she gave him up when he broke his promise about not drinking. I have ordered them out of my house. Do you think I did right? And what can I do for them? A LOVING WOMAN

You were right, and so was your girl friend. It is too bad that the men drink. Can't you talk to them and try to show them how drink will lead to their physical and moral ruin?

Your Eyes Granulated Eyelids, Eyes inflamed by exposure to Sun, Dust and Wind quickly relieved by Murine Eye Remedy. No Smarting, just Eye Comfort. At Your Druggists or by mail 60c per Bottle. For Book of the Eye free write b-15
Murine Eye Remedy Co., Chicago.

People Object.

DEAR MISS GREY:

My husband and I have been separated for over a year. About a month ago he wrote me from a training camp where he now is asking me to bring our little son and pay him and his people a visit. His people and mine also object to our living together. I know he loves me and I love him. Please give me your advice. A SOLDIER'S WIFE.

What is the matter with you? Why do you let other people live your life for you? By all means go back to your husband

About an Address.

DEAR MISS GREY:

I am an 18-year-old girl and should like to have the address of some girl of my own age. I work here and have very little chance to get acquainted. Would like to write to a couple of girls of my own age. JUST A GIRL.

I am sorry, but it is against the policy of our paper to grant such a request as yours. I should advise that you go to church in your neighborhood and I am sure you will get acquainted with girls of your own age.

No Children.

DEAR MISS GREY:

I am a young married woman and have everything to make me happy. I am not very fond of children. Would rather play instead of my burdening myself with little ones. Do you think this will make any difference when we get older and the first glow of our love is gone? ELVA.

You are a very foolish little woman. Good times are all right, but when you get older they will have lost their appeal. Then you will want children around you. Think more seriously of your obligations to your husband and to the world, and not so much about fleeting pleasure.

Drop Him.

DEAR MISS GREY:

I am a young girl engaged to a man fourteen years my senior. After we were engaged I found out that he drank, threw away his money and got angry and slighted me. He has a divorce from his first wife. I feel that I would be miserable if I were to marry him. My folks know nothing of my promise to him. What shall I do? LILAC

Drop him immediately.

Too Young.

DEAR MISS GREY:

I am a boy of 15 in love with a girl of the same age. I have not seen her in three weeks, but when I went back to school she would not speak to me. I do not know what is the matter. Please tell me what to do. S. C.

Don't think about love. You are altogether too young. Ask the girl why she is angry, however, if you wish to be satisfied.

Bashful Girl.

DEAR MISS GREY:

I am 23 years old and in love with a young man of 30 who has asked me to marry him. It just seems as if I cannot tell him that I love him, and he is waiting for his answer. He said he would like to kiss me very much. Would it be proper do you think? S. M.

Why, yes, if you expect to marry the man, and there seems to be no reason why you should not

Marriage Problem.

DEAR MISS GREY

I am keeping company with a girl three or four years my junior for the last two years and cannot fully understand her. She will scarcely talk to me, but has said she will marry me. Do you think that I will be safe in marrying her Will this bashfulness disappear after marriage? G.

Yes, it's only because she is not used to talking with men or perhaps because she does not know what you are interested in. Have a serious talk with her about yourself, and see if you can't make her more companionable.

Anxious to Please.

DEAR MISS GREY:

I am a boy of 18 in love with a girl my same age. I correspond with her. Once I asked her for a date and she said it would be all right with her, but did not know what her parents would say. Do you think I might ask her for a date thru letter? What would be a nice present to give her? PATIENCE.

Perhaps if you write to her parents and ask them if you may call on their daughter, they will grant permission If you wish to send the girl a gift, a fine box of candy, music, if she plays or sings, a book or some flowers make the most appropriate presents.

Soldier Correspondent.

DEAR MISS GREY:

I am a girl of 15 corresponding with a soldier of 25. He writes friendly letters and has sent me several large pictures of his camp. He has asked for my photo several times. Do you think that the difference in our ages should keep us from corresponding? ANXIOUS PEGGY.

No, not if you write friendly letters. Do not send your photo. It would be in bad taste

Uncertain Sailor.

DEAR MISS GREY:

I am in the Navy and am corresponding with a girl in my home town. We went together about three months before I left. She is good to me, sending me cakes and candies all the time. I could never make up my mind at home whether or not I loved her. There is no other girl I think more of. Now do you think I should continue to write to her or not? Probably she thinks I love her. She is a very nice girl, but there is something wrong. JACK.

Yes, write to her if only out of courtesy. Do not put anything into your letters which she can take as love making. If you have said nothing to her in the past or have not acted the part of the lover, she has no reason to believe that you love her.

Another Girl.

DEAR MISS GREY:

I am in love with a young man five years my senior who is now in France. I have heard that he is engaged to another girl tho I have never seen him with her. He has never spoken to me of love, but shows that he likes me in many different ways. He has sent me his picture and wants me to send him mine. Do you think I should continue to write to him? M. E. W.

Why not take the easiest way and ask the young man if he is engaged to the girl? Don't believe gossip. Continue to write him friendly letters, and don't assume that he loves you until he tells you so.

Unwilling Correspondent.

DEAR MISS GREY:

I am a trained nurse and while in training met a young man who asked me to marry him. I gave my consent. He is working on a R. R. now and I hear from him only once in two or three weeks. He says he hasn't time for writing any oftener. He has asked me to write every day. Do you think he loves me or is he only playing with my heart? WORRIED RUTH.

It is hard to say since I know nothing of the young man's habits. You had better find out about them yourself. It may be, however, that he is a poor correspondent and doesn't care to write for that reason.

Letter Writing.

DEAR MISS GREY.

I used to go with a young man, but about four years ago we had a quarrel, and we were both too contrary to make it up. Just before he left for camp he came to bid me good-by,

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and said that he still loved me. He has written only twice since he left, and in the last letter asked me not to answer as he was leaving and would drop me a card from his new destination. I later learned that he never left the place. Would you answer that letter? PUZZLED.

Yes, and demand an explanation.

Soldier Friend.

DEAR MISS GREY:

I am going with a girl a year my senior. She loves me but she corresponds with a soldier in France. How can I find out if she loves me more than she does him? Would you advise me to keep company with her? I have her ring and she does not want me to give it back to her. UNHAPPY WHITEHEAD.

Don't be jealous. It never pays.

Tell Him.

DEAR MISS GREY:

Should a woman tell a man her past history before they are married? I am going to marry a good man and I don't think it necessary that I should tell him everything about myself, but I want to be fair with him. Perhaps if he should find out about a few things later he would be sorry he had married me. I love him dearly. Tell me what to do. DORRIS.

If the things you speak about are serious, by all means tell him about them now and avoid serious trouble later. If they are merely trivial, he won't care to hear about them.

Bad Habits.

DEAR MISS GREY:

I am a girl of 18 and have been engaged to be married to a young man. We were to be married Christmas, but one of his cousins told me about some of his bad habits, which I didn't like. He also told a little falsehood about me, but said he meant nothing by it. I have given him up. I see him often and he wants me to take him back. What shall I do? I love him dearly BROKEN HEART.

If the habits are such that you cannot break him of them by all means give him up. However, do not expect a man to be a saint. If he shows a willingness to reform you might take him back on probation.

Don't Bother.

DEAR MISS GREY:

I am 18 years old and was going [illegible] We got along together nicely but about two months ago he became angry and would not even speak to me. I asked him for the reason and he would not tell me. He has now moved to another town and has not written. Some of his boy friends would not tell me what was the matter but did say he thought I was angry at him. I love him dearly. How can I find out why he is angry and convince him that I am not? BLUE EYES.

Don't bother. There are plenty of other young men. He has not acted as a gentleman should.

* * *

Be Charitable.

"WE SHOULD not rejoice at the shortcomings of others."

"Eh?"

"In other words, don't let a mote in your neighbor's eye produce a beam in your own."

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The Day-Dream

By Eleanor W. Atwater

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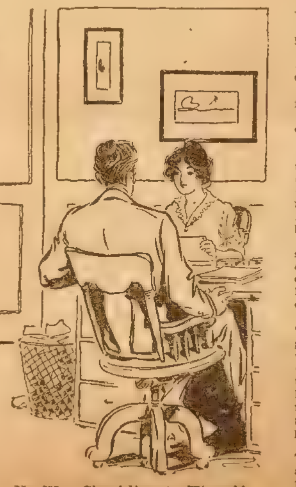
CRASHAW was leaving Bryant & Co., and little Miss Thatcher was in despair. She had worked for the big, blond treasurer for nearly six years, and she could not bear the thought of working for any one else.

Crashaw was to leave because the firm wanted a cheaper man. Besides, the new management was a little crooked, at least, in comparison with the rigid standards of the original Bryant & Co. The name was to remain, but the "new blood" was not blue blood. It was not good blood. Miss Thatcher knew that, as every one did.

She knew, too, that her position was shaky. The new people were dropping the old staff. They had the "new blood" mania. Besides they wanted people with the crooked streak in them. Of course, it does not matter what a plain stenographer's principles are, but the new people did not like the "ladylike" atmosphere of the correspondence department. It wanted cheap, slangy girls who chewed gum and made mistakes, thereby being worth seven or eight dollars a week only. Miss Thatcher was getting twenty-five.



He Was Chuckling to Himself.

Miss Thatcher was 30. She lived alone in a boarding house, and had lived there, in the backwater of the city, since she came to the metropolis, at twenty-three. And, living alone, she had indulged in day-dreams.

Of late months Crashaw had figured largely in these. The big, single treasurer was a bachelor. He was the best man on earth, in Miss Thatcher's opinion, because one is very daring in day-dreams even a mouse-colored individuality like Miss Thatcher's, her day-dreams had taken this form:

"Miss Thatcher, there is something I want to tell you. Since you have been here your work and your devotion have inspired me with the greatest respect for you. Can I venture to hope that some day you will honor me by becoming Mrs. Crashaw?"

"Why, Mr. Crashaw, I never dreamed of such a thing. Give me a little time to think it over. Of course, I utterly reciprocate your sentiments, but I am not sure whether I love you."

Nothing like that had happened. Crashaw's unfailing courtesy betrayed no tender feeling. And Miss Thatcher, ignorant of his life tho she was, and lonely, had come to realize that.

She pitied the big man without a woman to take care of him, to take charge of his life. His coat was always so dusty. She was sure he ate things that were not good for him.

But since Crashaw had received six months' notice, according to contract, Miss Thatcher had been worried about her own future. At thirty a woman of Miss Thatcher's type finds it difficult to start at the bottom again; and she saw no prospect of ever receiving twenty-five dollars to start. What would her ability count against the magic of personality?

That she lacked sorely, and she only waited while the inexorable months flew by. She was too honest to look for another position until Bryant & Co. dispensed with her services. So she did nothing, and it was a week before Crashaw was to leave that the blow fell.

It came in the shape of a curt official letter, intimating that her services would be no longer required one week from date.

Little Miss Thatcher had not nerved herself for the blow, tho she had expected it so long. She cried all night, and went down to the office the next morning with a red nose.

All that day Crashaw kept her busier than ever before in his private office. It was not until five o'clock that he leaned back in his chair and watched Miss Thatcher attentively. He was chuckling to himself, kindly man that he was. He had known that Miss Thatcher would be discharged, and he had arranged to take her over on his staff with the original Bryant, who was starting another business. He knew that the new people, with their tricky ways, would eventually have to go under, and permit Bryant to buy back the control. But he needed Miss Thatcher, and he had always felt sorry for her.

Somehow her clothes seemed old-maidish; and he was sure that she was a devotee of the chafing dish. He wished she had some good man to take care of her.

She was never pretty, and not in the least degree so at the present time, with her eyes swollen from weeping, and her nose decidedly pink. The treasurer knew that she was worried over having to go.

As a matter of fact, Miss Thatcher was almost equally worried over their impending separation. Six years of office companionship cannot but mean a good deal. And tho she knew her day-dreams were foolishness, still they persisted, even tho this cataclysm that had come on both of them.

"Well, Miss Thatcher, I have given you a lot of work today," said Crashaw. "But there will be very little more. And now I have a great, and I trust, pleasant surprise for you. Miss Thatcher, there is something I want to tell you."

Little Miss Thatcher was totally unable to prevent the electric thrill that ran thru her. The very words! It was coming at last! Amazed at her prescience, she only stared at Crashaw with her weepy eyes.

"Since you have been here," he resumed, "your work and your devotion have inspired me with the greatest admiration. Miss Thatcher——"

The treasurer broke off in astonishment. Miss Thatcher, always so staid and self-possessed, was weeping openly. More, she was weeping on his shoulder. And then she looked up at him with a face that was so radiant that the treasurer was no longer astonished—only glad.

He did not know how it happened, either, but his arm had fallen about her in the most natural way in the world. Mr. Crashaw was so very big, and Miss Thatcher so frail, that there was one position toward which they inevitably gravitated. In fact, if any office boy had happened to enter at that moment he would have seen Miss Thatcher seated almost—not quite, for the chair's edge did interpose a tiny edge—well, on the treasurer's knee.

"My dear——" faltered Crashaw, wondering how such a wonderful piece of luck had come to him, and whether he had blurted out anything which might have been construed as a declaration.

That was the time when Miss Thatcher altogether forgot the rest of the day-dream. For she only raised her eyes to Crashaw's and whispered.

"Yes. I will. Of course, I will."

And Crashaw found himself gladder than he had ever been in his life.

* * *

Wrong Man.

"WE'VE come," said the chairman of a political committee in a south of Ireland city, "to ask you to take this nomination. This city needs a man like you—strong, brave, self-reliant, owning no master, fearing no man."

The great man was visibly touched.

"I'll not deny," said he, "that your kind words have shaken my resolution. I trust that, if elected, I may justify your confidence and prove that I am indeed strong, brave, self-reliant, that I own no master and fear no man. Suppose you wait a minute till I see if my wife will let me accept!"

* * *

Tit for Tat.

AN IRISHMAN paid a visit to China. He was quick tempered and it was not long before he had high words with a native who spoke very broken English. Seizing a dish from a stall close at hand, Pat let fly with it, and the Chinaman's head was cut. On being brought before the English consul he was asked why he had insulted the native.

"Sure," replied Pat, "he spoke broken English, and I just gave him broken China in return."

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Into a pint bottle, put 2½ ounces of Pinex; then add plain granulated sugar syrup to make a full pint. Or you can use clarified molasses, honey, or corn syrup, instead of sugar syrup, if desired. Either way, the full pint saves about two-thirds of the money usually spent for cough preparations, and gives you a more positive, effective remedy. It keeps perfectly and tastes pleasant—children like it.

You can feel this take hold instantly, soothing and healing the membranes in all the air passages. It promptly loosens a dry, tight cough, and soon you will notice the phlegm thin out, and then disappear altogether. A day's use will usually break up an ordinary throat or chest cold, and it is also splendid for bronchitis, croup, whooping cough, and bronchial asthma.

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The Moving Spirit

By George Elmer Cobb

(Copyright)

"NEW neighbors, Ezra," announced Mrs. Perkins.

"That so? Hope we don't lose them as quick as we did the last ones."

"Maybe that was our own fault," submitted his wife. "They sort of perked up with their stiff city ways, and it nettled me. You was down with that spell of rheumatism most of the time, and Walden was away at school. It's lonesome and dismal to see the place next door vacant all the while. Besides, every new family we win to stay, helps the town. Let us try and make this new family stay."

"Who are they?" inquired Mr. Perkins.

"Their names is Purtelle—father, mother, young lady."

"Just match us, don't they?" suggested Mr. Perkins. "Well, you're the moving spirit, Janet, and me and the boy will follow the leader."

Ned Perkins and his father humbly took heed to quite a lecture that evening. Mrs. Perkins showed that she not only had studied out a plan as to the treatment of their prospective neighbors, but had pursued certain inquiries that had resulted in the gleaning of a good deal of information regarding them.

"They never lived in a country town before, I understand," said Mrs. Perkins. "Mr. Purtelle has just retired from business, and his wife has worn herself out with her social duties, fussing for company, I suppose that means. The girl is just out of school. She is in love with flowers, chickens, everything that grows and runs. They are real nice people."

"I don't doubt it, if you say so, Janet," observed her husband. "And they will be good neighbors."

"You said a young lady in the family, eh?" remarked Ned, thoughtfully.

"Yes, and you be good to her—them, Ned," warned his mother.

"I will, to her—them," pledged Ned, with a broad smile.

"Now the city people are slow to get acquainted with," went on Mrs. Perkins. "Don't intrude yourself. Be pleasant, but dignified. Show them all the kindness you can. Above all, do everything in your power to set them in love with the country life. Now, Ned, do spare enough time from your athletics and fishing to pay some attention to these good people."

"Mother, mine," responded Ned with [illegible] I'll do just that thing, and as to the fishing—why, I'll have this Miss—Miss——" [illegible]

"Miss Edna Purtelle."

"Yes, Edna, a member of the Anglers' Club inside of a week!"

"Don't be too forward," warned his mother.

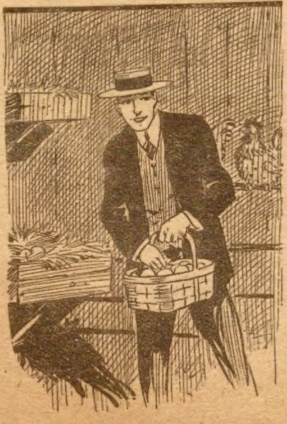
That evening two big vans loaded with furniture arrived, and nearly all night long their drivers were putting up shades, laying down rugs and getting the house generally in order.

It was not until after dusk the next evening that two members of the Purtelle family, mother and daughter, arrived. Ned was away fishing at the time, but his mother informed him of the circumstances upon his return.

"The father must be detained in town on business," surmised Mrs. Perkins, "for he did not come with them."

Ned was up bright and early. He paced around the garden, and then hearing a swish beyond the fence, man high, that separated the two residences, moved towards it. As he tiptoed to look over, an eager, curious faced girl likewise tiptoed, with tiny feet resting on the inside stringer. She lifted to him a rosebud vision of beauty.

"You was peeping, I was peeping—oh, dear!" exclaimed the little maiden breathlessly, jumping down in confusion.



Eggs Were Placed in the Nests by the Obliging Ned.

"Then we must be interested in one another," suggested Ned.

"Oh, I know!" fluttered Edna, "they told me a boy lived next door."

"Boy!" began Ned resentfully, and then audaciously: "I am the boy next door, little girl."

Edna pouted charmingly. She was plucking at a rambler rose vine that covered the fence, reached over it and drooped in great fragrant clusters over into the next yard.

"Oh, dear," she gasped, "I musn't do that!"

"Why not?" he inquired.

"They're your roses."

"Not at all," declared Ned unblushingly. "The law on partition fences out here in the country, is that half of it belongs to each adjoining tenant and all that hangs over it."

"Then I can pick all the roses I want?"

"Why, certainly, and come over and get as many more from our side."

"Oh, I couldn't do that without asking mother," demurred Edna, and ran into the house.

Ned was charmed. More than that, he was smitten. He managed to be at his post in the garden immediately after breakfast. He observed Edna looking wistfully toward the cherry trees at the back of the Perkins house.

"I never saw cherries grow before," she said wistfully.

"Why don't you get a basket and pick some?" he insinuated, "in your own orchard?"

"Our orchard?"

"Why, yes. That strip back of you is free to you. Lot law out in the country, you know."

Edna regarded him keenly and suspiciously, but the audacious fellow did not explain to Edna that it was a continuation of the Perkins lot that went around the new neighbor's domain.

She went wild with delight as he got a stepladder, held the basket and let her pick the ripe, bursting globes in "her orchard." In fact, up till nearly noon they were together, and Ned forgot all about fishing.

Later that day, a coop of chickens arrived. Edna called over the fence to know if Ned couldn't come over and get the new arrivals into the chicken house. This led to an introduction to Mrs. Purtelle, who showed herself well pleased with the young man.

"And when will there be some eggs? When do the chickens lay most?" fluttered Edna.

"Why—well, night times mostly," reported Ned unflinchingly.

"Then there will be some fresh eggs for breakfast in the morning!" cried Edna delightedly.

There was, notwithstanding that Ned had discovered that the imported brood consisted mostly of roosters. In the morning with a scream of wild joy Edna discovered nearly two dozen eggs, surreptitiously placed in the nests before daylight by the obliging Ned.

Again a day of rare companionship, Cupid forging the chains closer and closer as the sunny hours went by. Then Edna was full of the theme of the little chicks. A "setting" was duly provided for by Ned.

"And when will the little darlings be ripe?" inquired the eager novice in rural ways.

"Well," responded Ned slowly, with cold devoted serenity, "with warm weather, by morning."

"Oh, I shall be awake at daylight!" declared the excited enthusiast.

"So will I!" voted Ned, and was. At the weird hour of midnight he had substituted a new brood of their own for the setting.

Mr. Purtelle arrived at the end of the week. He stared hard at Edna, as she introduced Ned, as if he were some old-time chum. Then there was a closer acquaintance of the members of the family all around. One day the truant pair came home consciously flustered.

"I've asked her and I love her," Ned told Mr. Purtelle promptly.

"Humph!" growled Mr. Purtelle, good-naturedly enough, "and what about the false pretenses of cherries, eggs and the like?"

"Oh, that shows his kindly disposition, papa!" chirped in Edna. "I saw thru the humbug of his 'lot law' and twelve-hour chickens all the time, but he was so obliging—so—so anxious to please me, that I led him on because—why, because," acknowledged the blushing maid, "I—I loved him."

Yes, Little Girl, There's a Santa

IS THERE really a Santa Claus? How many times has the question been asked?

There was once a little girl whose name was Virginia who sought high authority for an answer to the question. She wrote a letter to Charles A. Dana, editor of the New York Sun, saying: "Some of my friends say there is no Santa Claus. Please tell me the truth. Is there a Santa Claus?" The famous editor was pleased to tell her the truth. This was his reply, printed in his paper:

"Virginia, your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the skepticism of a skeptical age. They do not believe except they see. They think that nothing can be which is not comprehensible to their little minds. All minds, Virginia, whether they be men's or children's, are little. In this great universe of ours man is a mere insect, an ant, in his intellect, as compared with the boundless world about him, as measured by the intelligence capable of grasping the whole of truth and knowledge. Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy. Alas! how dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus. It would be as dreary as if there were no Virginias. There would be no childlike faith then, no poetry, no romance, to make tolerable this existence. We should have no enjoyment except in sense and sight. The eternal light with which childhood fills the world would be extinguished. Not believe in Santa Claus? You might as well not believe in fairies! You might get your papa to hire men to watch in all the chimneys on Christmas eve to catch Santa Claus, but that is no sign that there is no Santa Claus. The most real things in the world are those that neither children nor men can see. Did you ever see fairies dancing on the lawn? Of course not; but that's no proof that they are not there. Nobody can conceive or imagine all the wonders that are unseen and unseeable in the world. You may tear apart the baby's rattle and see what makes the noise inside, but there is a veil covering the unseen world which not the strongest man, nor even the united strength of all the strongest men that ever lived, could tear apart. Only faith, fancy, poetry, love, romance, can push aside that curtain and view and picture the supernal beauty and glory beyond. Is it all real? Ah, Virginia, in all this world there is nothing else real and abiding. No Santa Claus? Thank God! he lives and lives forever. A thousand years from now, Virginia, nay, ten times ten thousand years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood."

No More Piles

A Free Trial of Pyramid Pile Treatment Is One of the Grandest Events You Ever Experienced.

You are suffering something awful with itching, bleeding, protruding piles or hemorrhoids. Now, go over

You Positively Cannot Afford to Ignore These Remarkable Pyramids.

to any drug store and get a 60-cent box of Pyramid Pile Treatment. Relief comes so quick you will jump for joy. If you are in doubt, send for a free trial package by mail. You will then be convinced. Don't delay. Take no substitute.

FREE SAMPLE COUPON

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Kindly send me a Free sample of Pyramid Pile Treatment, in plain wrapper.

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T. H. McNeilley, care Kansas City Railways Co., Kansas City, Mo., writes: "I am in receipt of your pipes, for which I thank you. The tobacco was received some time ago, and I am taking great pleasure in smoking it."

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Send 10c for a box of samples drawn from our 2-year old stock and freshly packed in wax paper. State whether chewing or smoking; strong, medium or mild.

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Tubes or "Inside Armor" Free.
Take time to write today for
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A toilet preparation of merit.
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For Restoring Color and Beauty to Gray and Faded Hair.
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Every Boy and Girl working to secure their Victory Diplomas send for 20 packages Bingo Perfumed Ironing Wax to sell at 10c each. Keep 60c and send balance to us. Can work till full amount is made. Order today. Send no money.
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accurate shooter, free for selling only 25 pieces of our Jewelry at 10c. each. Write for Jewelry today.
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This pretty band WEDDING RING GIVEN for five names of your neighbors and ten cents to pay postage &c.
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WRITE TODAY
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FREE
Stem wind and set watch, guaranteed 2 years, for selling 25 art and religious pictures or 25 pkgs. post cards at 10c each. Order your choice.
GATES MFG. CO. Dept. 445 Chicago

The New Mayor

By Victor Radcliffe

(Copyright.)

THE Mayor of Tolliver Gulch drew up his horse as a piercing scream rang out beyond the belt of timber lining the lonely mountain road he was traversing. Then noting a cloud of smoke thru the trees he diverged from the trail, got beyond the barrier and made out the little town of Golconda in the distance, and nearer at hand on its outskirts a lonely hut, ablaze below and a woman outside, wringing her hands and shrieking helplessly.

New mayoralty honors clustered thick and newly about John Griffiths at Tolliver Gulch, but here at a distance from his home town, and ever chivalrous and helpful, he forgot dignity. He dashed up to the side of the distracted woman within three minutes, brought his steed to its haunches, summarily leaped to the ground and shouted forth:

"Any one in the building?"

"No! No!" cried the woman, "but all my papers are. They will be lost; we will be ruined—oh, save them! Save them!"

She was a tiny bit of humanity, peppery and active. Griffiths saw that, but she had evidently not been able to lift a heavy ladder that she had dragged to the spot.

"Where are the papers?" inquired Griffiths.

"Up in the little low attic. Beyond that window." And she pointed upwards. They're in a box on top of a big chest. No! No!" she added, frantically, as Griffiths made a movement as if to rush in thru the open lower door. "It's all ablaze in there. The ladder! Oh, quick! quick! Never mind anything but the papers."

John Griffiths had the ladder speedily in place. It was not even smudged, so promptly and deftly did he reach the attic, secure the wooden box described and place it in the possession of the anxious, trembling and grateful woman.

"The old hut is gone and I'm glad of it!" she exclaimed. "It was not fit to live in and hasn't been for a long time. That lazy, roving husband of mine will have a startler when he comes back, and I'm glad of that, too! The papers—they're saved, thank goodness! They mean a good deal to me, for they are deeds, and mine claims, and all that. Mister, if a ten-dollar bill——"

"Thank you, but I've done a simple duty, and glad to be a help to you," interrupted Griffiths. "Can I be of any further assistance?"

"No, mister, but I'll never forget your kindness. I've a sister in town who will take me in till my husband shows up—the worthless, wandering critter!"

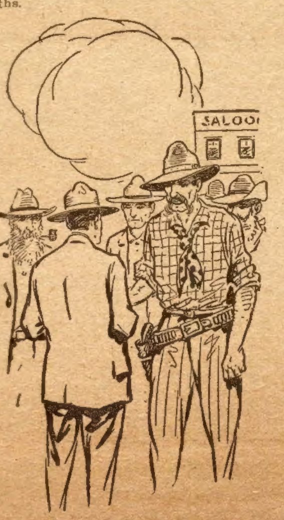
The mayor of Tolliver Gulch smiled to himself as he recognized the diminutive little lady as a being with a spirit of her own. Then he rode on his way, thinking of another certain little lady who filled his thoughts continually. It was a rough community among whom he had cast his lot at the Gulch, but he had found a jewel rare amid the incongruous environment. It was Velma Dalton, the daughter of the district judge. Griffiths, as a rising young lawyer, had won the good opinion of the judge. The latter represented the reform element of the struggling border settlement. It was thru his influence and support that Griffiths had been elected mayor.

That position was proving anything but a bed of roses. The rough element of the Gulch was opposed to innovations. Defeated at the polls, they went about cross-grained and vengeful. There were mutterings of discontent and veiled threats. The outcast element, however, feared the law, and the dignity and determination of the judge had so far prevented any serious outbreak.

Griffiths reached the Gulch just after dark. As he passed the Red Beaver tavern he caught the echoes of some wild jubilation. He learned its cause when he reached home. His landlady looked frightened and agitated.

"Oh, I am so glad you have got home safe!" she exclaimed. "They have been here."

"Who has been here?" questioned Griffiths.



Calmly Griffiths Regarded the Mouthy Demagogue.

"The committee from the rustlers. It's about renewing the license of the dance hall, sir."

"I answered them once," spoke Griffiths, his lips setting firmly. "They have had my ultimatum."

"Yes, sir; but they threaten a big row. They had Giant Gabe with them, and his gang. It seems they've hired him to come here and upset the town, if you don't give way."

"Not an inch!" pronounced Griffiths, determinedly.

"Then, sir, don't show yourself on the streets. The mob is drunk and ugly, and bound to do you up if you don't grant that license."

Griffiths paid no attention to this warning. He felt it beneath his dignity. He called upon Velma that same evening. Her father was serious and she anxious over the situation. Neither, however, attempted to influence him to recede one step from his fixed position regarding the carrying out of the law.

The next morning Griffiths proceeded quietly to his office. He had heard of a wild debauch at the tavern and of this imported bravo, Giant Gabe, and his gang. It seems they had appeared in similar circumstances as hirelings to help the half-subdued rowdy element of the towns voting for reform, hoping to intimidate the champions of the new movement.

The convivialists of the evening previous were, it seemed, sleeping off the effects of their debauch during the morning. Just after noon, however, as Griffiths was crossing the public square he saw a hooting, struggling mob pouring out thru the doors of the tavern.

At their head was a red-shirted, brawny-fisted fellow over six feet in height and viciously intoxicated. Griffiths doubted not that this was Giant Gabe. Urged by the crowd he hustled along to the spot where Griffiths had halted. He squared off in front of him, egged on by his turbulent cohorts.

"You're the mayor, they tell me!" he bellowed. "Well, I'm nominated by the people to protect their liberties. Rattlesnakes—I eat 'em!"

Giant Gabe glared horribly, leaped up two feet in the air and cracked his heels together.

"Dynamite!" he roared—"I sleep over a box of it!"

Calmly Griffiths regarded the mouthy demagogue, but planted firmly, his glance noting every movement of the raging bully.

"Powder and shot—my chewing gum! You goody-goody specimen of a tenderfoot, I'm going to wipe you out with one whack!"

Swish! Giant Gabe struck out, but Griffiths dodged. Then up came his fist. The burly bully lay in a heap at his feet.

"None of that, you big coward!"

A woman's rasping tones uttered the words. She shot thru the crowd, and as Giant Gabe tugged at his belt for a revolver, grabbed him by one ear.

"You great hulking bluffer!" she cried. "You'd shoot at the unarmed man, eh? There! and there! and there!" and she cuffed him soundly. "Know who this man is?" she demanded, pointing to the mayor. "He's the man who saved all our valuable papers when our old shanty burned down. March!"

Giant Gabe struggled to his feet and slouched away from the spot. Most of the crowd roared with laughter. The tiny woman dominated the great rugged giant as tho he were a pigmy.

An hour later word went out from Giant Gabe to his adherents to return to their homes. To the rebellious hometown mob Gabe sent other word, that if any further move was made against the new mayor "he would move in and clean out the crowd, tavern and all!"

So Nancy, wife of Giant Gabe, saved the day, and Tolliver Gulch settled down into respectability, and its mayor married Velma Dalton.

How Promotion Helped

"OH DEAR!" sighed the little stenographer, her sad gaze bent upon the bookkeeper. "I wish some one could get promoted.

"Why?" asked the bookkeeper.

"Why? Because every one needs it!" replied the little stenographer. "You sit there with your back to me all day long and grunt when I speak to you. And Mr. Gray comes in with his hat on and barely nods 'good morning' as he hurries by. Mr. Nichols sits and puffs smoke almost right in my face until I really believe he forgets that I'm human and is trying to put rings on my nose. And even the postman throws letters at me and lets me pick them up if they fall on the floor! Everybody is getting more rude every day, and there ought to be an awakening!"

"Well, how would a promotion help the situation?" drawled the bookkeeper, as one speaks in an effort to break silence, rather than a desire to know.

"It's a matter of applied psychology—and maybe you wouldn't understand so erudite a discussion if I entered into it with you," said the little stenographer, with a superior smile, lost on the shoulders of the bookkeeper's somewhat polished office coat. "So I'll give you an example.

"There's the messenger service. Two weeks ago I had begun to agree with the world at large in the commonly accepted opinion that messengers were lazy. Those boys actually would take ten minutes to answer my buzzer and you could see them sitting on the window sills in the halls any time.

"But suddenly things changed! Boys began to dash in and out like mad. No sooner would I turn the buzzer than the boy was up for the telegram! And I saw three men turn and watch a boy race down the hall, as surprised as I was. We all laughed at him, it was so unusual and so surprising! And one of the men exclaimed that plainly the boy was new on the messenger force. But I knew he was an old employe and I also knew that he used to be the slowest of the slow!"

"But," suggested the bookkeeper, mildly, "I don't get the drift of the promotion business."

"Just be patient," advised the little stenographer. "I stopped a boy one day and asked about a certain youngster who had been my special favorite, for he had always lifted his hat and said good morning to me, even if I met him ten times in one forenoon. He was so nice and gentlemanly.

"The messenger of whom I was making my inquiry lifted his hat and smiled, and told me that the nice young man had been given a splendid position and was getting promoted all the time. In fact, he would be manager in no time! He had made a hit by his politeness and in consequence all the other boys were on the alert to adopt his formula for the attainment of success. When the boy left me he started to put on his hat, but remembered his manners and waited until he was outside. He has blossomed out into a regular Chesterfield and Chauncey M. Depew combined and I was never more graciously treated even when I shook hands with President Wilson.

"And so, maybe, if promotion reacts in that way for all those boys, it might help a little here. For instance, if the chief clerk in the other room could be made assistant manager you might hope to be made clerk, and you'd spruce up and try to be pleasant. And if——"

"But why not bring it nearer home?" suggested the bookkeeper, gently. "Now would it make a difference, do you think, if the stenographer was made general helpmate to the bookkeeper——"

He paused. She watched him as he sat, pen poised, waiting for her reply.

"Promotion means elevation," explained the little stenographer abstractedly, "and—and—this is the eighteenth floor already."

She picked up her pencils to answer a call.

A Little Suggestion

KIDNEY TROUBLE—A UNIVERSAL DISEASE

The weak spot in the human system is usually the kidneys—the most overworked organs in the whole body. Keep them clean and in proper working condition, and nature will repay you with health.

Don't wait until the first warnings have developed into final symptoms. At the first indication that the kidneys are not working properly go to your druggist and get Gold Medal Haarlem Oil Capsules—and you will get prompt relief. They will quickly relieve the stiffened joints, backache and other aches and pains; cleanse the kidneys, purify the blood and stimulate the liver, stomach and other organs to healthy action.

For more than 200 years Gold Medal Haarlem Oil Capsules has been the recognized remedy for kidney and bladder ailments. They are imported direct from the laboratories at Haarlem, Holland. Get them at any drug store, and do not take a substitute. In sealed boxes, three sizes.

"Cure Your Rupture Like I Cured Mine"

Old Sea Captain Cured His Own Rupture After Doctors Said "Operate or Death."

His Remedy and Book Sent Free.

Captain Collings sailed the seas for many years; then he sustained a bad double rupture that soon forced him to not only remain ashore, but kept him bedridden for years. He tried doctor after doctor and truss after truss. No results! Finally, he was assured that he must either submit to a dangerous and abhorrent operation or die. He did neither! He cured himself instead.

"Fellow Men and Women, You Don't Have To Be Cut Up, and You Don't Have To Be Tortured By Trusses."

Captain Collings made a study of himself, of his condition—and at last he was rewarded by the finding of the method that so quickly made him a well, strong, vigorous and happy man.

Anyone can use the same method; it's simple, easy, safe and inexpensive. Every ruptured person in the world should have the Captain Collings book, telling all about how he cured himself, and how anyone may follow the same treatment in their own home without any trouble. The book and medicine are FREE. They will be sent prepaid to any rupture sufferer who will fill out the below coupon. But send it right away—now—before [illegible] paper.

FREE RUPTURE BOOK AND REMEDY COUPON.

Capt. W. A. Collings (Inc.)
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Please send me your FREE Rupture Remedy and Book without any obligation on my part whatever.

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Don't Be Cut—Until You Try This New Home Cure That Anyone Can Use Without Discomfort or Loss of Time. Simply Chew Up a Pleasant Tasting Tablet Occasionally and Rid Yourself Permanently of Piles.

Let Me Prove This Free.

My internal method for the treatment and permanent cure of piles is the correct one. Thousands upon thousands of cured cases testify to this, and I want you to try this method at my expense.

No matter whether your case is of long standing or recent development—whether it is chronic or acute—whether it is occasional or permanent—you should send for this free trial treatment.

No matter where you live—no matter what your age or occupation—if you are troubled with piles my method will relieve you promptly.

I especially want to send it to those apparently hopeless cases where all forms of salves, suppositories, etc., have failed.

I want you to realize that my method of treating piles is the one infallible treatment that positively and permanently cures.

This liberal offer of free treatment is too important for you to neglect a single day. Write now. Send no money. Simply mail the coupon—but do this now—TODAY.

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We positively give a genuine American Stem Wind and Set Watch, beautifully designed case, warranted time-keeper, 5-year guarantee; Sparkling Set or Plain Ring all for selling 24 of our easy to sell Jewelry articles at 10c each. When sold send $2.40 & we'll send Watch & Ring. Ladies' or Gents' style chain. Home Supply Co., Dept. 407, Chicago, Ill.

Be a Detective Excellent opportunity, good pay, travel. Write C. T. Ludwig, 120 Westover Bldg., Kansas City, Mo.

ASTHMA TREATMENT sent you on FREE TRIAL. If it cures, send $1.00; if not, don't. Give express office. Write today. W. K. Sterline, 836 Ohio Ave., Sidney, Ohio

Too Up-To-Date.

"THAT stenographer was the most up to date girl in the world," said the business man as he wearily rubbed his forehead.

"Isn't that the kind of a girl you wanted?" queried his friend.

"Yes and no," replied the business man. "There's such a thing as being too up to date, too far ahead of the times. That girl came into this office a simple, unsophisticated little stenographer who knew nothing but how to scratch a few stenographic pot hooks in a 5 cent notebook. After she had been with us a month she had revolutionized the entire works. The first thing she did was to insist that we get our supplies in quantities. The former stenographer never bought a new notebook until she had filled the one she was working on.

"The new pride of the office insisted that we buy stamps in quantities also. We had been buying them from day to day and never seemed to have enough for our outgoing mail. We felt like a large mail order house when she came in with $5 worth one day and spread them all over her desk.

"As our business grew, and I think she was partly responsible for it, our outgoing mail assumed large proportions. She said we would have to put in an addressing machine or she would quit. We put in the machine and hired a boy to run it. Then she sent in orders for all sorts of labor saving stuff. Our former quiet little office soon assumed the appearance of a munitions factory. The whir of belts and cogs was deafening.

"Oh! our little stenographer gem was there with the progress all right. There wasn't anything new in the market that she didn't hear about and stuff she didn't hear about she asked about. Agents from all the office furniture and equipment concerns wore out the floor on the way to her office. She knew them all by their first names and looked eagerly at all the new devices they brought out.

"But she was no easy mark for any of them. They couldn't fool her with useless stuff simply because it was new. It had to show results before she would buy it, but once it showed the labor saving results she was looking for she ordered it and we paid for it.

"Adding machines added and subtracting machines took away faster than a man's eye could follow them. Dictaphones and phona phones littered the place, while the little stenographer flitted among them in the height of her glory. Our office became noted as one in which more efficiency was on tap than in any other place of its kind in the country. Business men made it a Mecca and the little stenographer was busily engaged by the hour explaining how she did it."

"Well, what about it?" asked the other man. "What happened at the finish that makes you so morose?"

"Well, sir, that wonderful girl, that little queen of efficiency who could have brought order out of any chaos, what did she do, sir, but up and marry the laziest, most inefficient, good for nothing chap in the office—my son Bill. She quit her job and my efficiency system is fast going to pieces. I would have been happier had I never heard or known anything about efficiency."

Classified Want Ads

Information— The rate for one insertion in The Saturday Blade and one insertion in Chicago Ledger is 30 cents a word, minimum 14 words, less 3% for cash. Each initial and group of figures is counted as a word, and the name and address are also counted. This is the minimum rate; neither more nor less is charged, irrespective of size or number of insertions. An ad may appear in both publications of the same week, or in the Blade of one week and the Ledger of the next.

W. D. BOYCE CO., Publisher, 500-514 N. Dearborn St., Chicago.

AGENTS WANTED

OFFICIAL ENDORSED WAR BOOK, MAPS, charts and diagrams. Unique copyrighted service insert for soldier's photograph, regiment and military record. Sells like hot cakes to soldiers and friends regardless other war books. Endorsed by highest U. S. military official. American, Canadian, British, French and Italian official photographs. Complete and authentic, low price. Agent's profit $1.10 to $1.50. Big premiums extra. Prompt shipment. Freight paid. Credit given. Thrilling battle scenes, wonderful airplanes, Zeppelins, submarines, torpedo boats, tanks and battleships Hun atrocities, poison gas and liquid fire. Send 10 cents for postage on magnificent free outfit. H. L. Baldwin Co., Cleveland, O., 314-W Rockefeller Bldg.

AGENTS: 2 IN 1 REVERSIBLE RAINCOAT. Two coats in one. One side a handsome black raincoat, reverse side fine dress coat. Something new. Not sold in stores. Steam vulcanized. Guaranteed water-proof. Big seller. All styles and sizes for men, women and children. Write for agency. Guaranteed Raincoat Co., 1511 North St., Dayton, Ohio.

AGENTS, EITHER SEX, MAKE $15.00 TO $30.00 daily selling great war book. Complete history of war, illustrated with scores of stirring photographic battle scenes, maps, etc. Agent's outfit free. Send 10c for postage. N. D. Thompson & Co., Fullerton Bldg., St. Louis, Mo.

AGENTS — NEW INVENTION PUZZLES world; wonderful chemical cloth; one rub [illegible] glazed auto windshield, or engine window, presto! glass stays clear 24 hours; can't blur; agents making $120 weekly. Security Mfg. Co., Dept. 53, [illegible], Ohio.

$20.00 DAILY DISTRIBUTING PRIZE peace pictures, "Liberty and Peace," "True Sons of Freedom," "Human Liberty Bell," "Foch," "Pershing," Honor Roll. Enormous demand. Samples free. Also portrait catalog. Consolidated Portrait Co., Dept. 12, 1034 W. Adams St., Chicago.

"WORLD WAR HISTORY"—COMPLETE, authentic, attractive book, well written. Big profit. Act quick. Outfit 25c. R. L. Phillips Publishing Co., Atlanta, Ga., Chicago, Ill., Philadelphia, Pa., Omaha, Neb., Waco, Texas. Address nearest office.

THE GREAT WORLD WAR ILLUSTRATED. Big opportunity—act now. Sell the best war book. Big commission—reliable company. Send 10c for postage on free outfit. Baldwin Publishing Co., 314A Rockefeller Bldg., Cleveland, Ohio.

AGENTS—CONNECT WITH US NOW. BIGgest profits ever known selling the best book on the World War. Complete in facts and illustrations. 50% commission. Write quick. Free outfit. Stanton & VanVliet Co., 501-A, Plymouth, Chicago.

AGENTS: SELL RICH-LOOKING IMPORTED 36x68 rugs, $1 each. Carter, Tenn., sold 115 in four days; profit $57. You can do same. Write for sample offer selling plan; exclusive territory; sample rug by parcel post prepaid 98c. Condon, Importer, Stonington, Maine.

AGENTS, MALE AND FEMALE, MAKING big money, selling "Egglite," original substitute for Fresh Eggs. Particulars free. Write quick. Dougherty Mfg. Co., 335 East 22nd Street, New York.

AGENTS WANTED—THE GUSHER PUMP is the pink pill for water circulation on Fords. Cannot overheat. Price $5. Make $75 weekly. Burns, 231 Insurance Exchange, Chicago.

HISTORY OF WORLD WAR BY FRANCIS A. March. Introduction by General March. Biggest pictorial book. Your profit averages $1.25 each. Outfit free. Historical Book Co., Chicago.

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55 VALUABLE FORMULAS, TRICKS, ILlusions, and household hints in our interesting magazine for two issues, 10c (coin). J. Jackson, 98 Randolph, Columbus, O.

PLEASANT EMPLOYMENT FOR RELIable agents. Experience unnecessary. Workers earn big pay. Brewer Art Co., Shelbyville, Indiana.

AGENTS. OUR "COMPLETE HISTORY OF War." Now ready; best terms. Write today for free outfit. Nichols Co., Dept. B, Naperville, Ill.

WE START YOU WITHOUT A DOLLAR— Soaps, extracts, perfumes, toilet goods. Experience unnecessary. Carnation Co., 26 S. Main, St. Louis.

IF INTERESTED IN PROFITABLE HOME employment write, enclosing stamp. De Lanfair Walton, Prairie City, Ill.

MIDGET BIBLE, SIZE OF POSTAGE stamp, 200 pages, 10c (coin), dozen 75c. J. Jackson, 98 Randolph, Columbus, O.

AGENTS WANTED—(Continued)

AGENTS — I'VE A NEW SOAP GAME that's a dandy. New stuff; 100% profits. Sample and full layout free. Write quick. Lacassian Co., Dept. 21, St. Louis, Mo.

HELP WANTED

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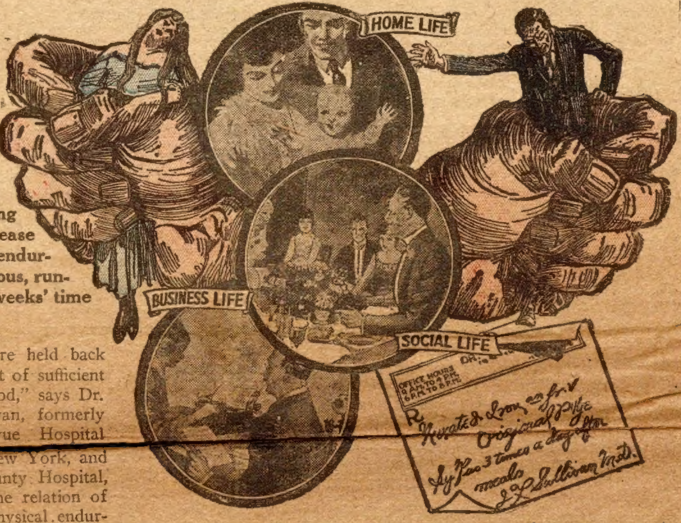
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